

FA'ÑAGUE: A CHAMORRO EPISTEMOLOGY
OF POST-LIFE COMMUNICATION

by

Dan Ho

B.A., Roosevelt University, 1988

M.A.T., University of Guam, 2013

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy

in

Indigenous Studies

University of Alaska Fairbanks

May 2018

© Copyright 2018 Dan Ho

APPROVED:

Michael S. Koskey, Committee Chair
Beth R. Leonard, Committee Co-Chair
Raymond J. Barnhardt, Committee Member
Sean Asiqluq Topkok, Committee Member
Todd Sherman, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts
Michael Castellini, Dean of the Graduate School

Abstract

The primary aim of this dissertation is to analyze a spiritual aspect of Chamorro cosmology known as *fa'ñague*, or visitations from the deceased, to shed light on how and why it exists in Guam, and how it differs among Chamorro Natives who experience it in the island and abroad. A secondary aim of the dissertation is to expand upon the scholarly documentation of Native Chamorro epistemologies concerning life and death, and the role of the spiritual realm in daily life of the people of the Marianas.

The dissertation is structured as follows: Part I offers an in-depth exploration and personification of Guam, the place, the culture, and the people in order to balance longstanding and erroneous conceptions about the Island. Part II includes the rationale for the research, a methodological framework, and a literature review. In addition, a full chapter on Chamorro epistemology is included to reinforce the elements of the Native worldview and way of knowing to provide context for the research findings. In Part III — the fruits of data gathering and analysis — are offered using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Finally, this dissertation hopes to argue and position a new model of Indigenous research methodology, which I am calling Neo-Indigenous Methodology. Essentially, it is an evolution from the de-colonizing approach borne by founding Indigenous scholars who sought to break from Western scholarly dialect to express and inform Native wisdom. Instead, Neo-Indigenous Methodology proposes that Indigenous scholars embrace the dialect of all Western humanistic discourse to further clarify and magnify pure Indigenous knowledge.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
List of Figures	vii
List of Appendices	viii
Acknowledgments	ix
How to Read This Work	1
Insight 1: Suspend Your Disbelief	1
Insight 2: Understand the Work of the Indigenous Scholar Today	2
Insight 3: Allow for a Non-Traditional Scholarly Form	4
Insight 4: Listen to the Page	4
Guam: A Personification	6
I. Her Body: The Island	9
II. Her Mind: The Chamorro People	13
III. Her Soul: The Chamorro Culture	17
The Research	19
I. Introduction	19
II. Rationale: A Personal Story	20
III. Research Questions	21
IV. Conceptual Framework and Methodology	22
1. Cultural theory	23
2. Dual-inheritance theory	24
3. Qualitative discourse and phenomenology	25
V. Research Approval	26
VI. Research Instruments	26
1. Interview questions	26
2. Online survey	26
VII. Research Statement	27
Review of Literature	27
I. The Strategy	27
II. A Survey of Some Post-Life Beliefs	28
1. In Guam	29
2. Among other Indigenous cultures	32
III. The Knowing: The Senses, Proof and Instinct	35
IV. An Argument for a Mixed Methodology	37
1. Collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data	39
2. Embracing rigorous procedure	40
3. Integrating two or more forms of data	40
4. Using the data to frame a broader format	40
A Chamorro Epistemology	43
I. The Elements of Our Native Knowledge	43
1. Element 1: <i>Mo'na</i>	44
2. Element 2: <i>Nene</i>	45
3. Element 3: <i>Adahi</i>	45
4. Element 4: <i>Gaige</i>	47
II. Schematic Considerations	47

III.	A Fractal Model of Culture	48
IV.	Holographic Inspiration	51
V.	Arriving at An Atomic Schema	54
VI.	Hindsight: Chamorro Epistemology in Action	58
VII.	On Simpatico	61
	The Research Process	63
I.	Research Issues	63
	1. Methodology	63
	2. Research participation.....	64
	A. In the field	64
	B. Online	65
	a. Participants' ages	67
	b. Ethnicity of participants	67
	c. Locations of participants	68
	3. Chamorro language engagement in the field	69
	Findings	70
I.	Formatting the Data, Findings, Conclusions and Discussion: A Roadmap.....	70
	Finding I. <i>Fa'ñague</i> is a Defining Feature of Chamorro Cosmology	72
	1. The Forms and personifications of <i>fa'ñague</i>	73
	A. <i>Difuntu</i>	73
	B. <i>Taotao Mo'na</i>	73
	C. <i>Duendes</i>	74
	D. <i>Man Baba</i>	74
	2. The cultural functions of <i>fa'ñague</i>	75
	A. <i>Fa'ñague</i> is a language modifier	75
	B. <i>Fa'ñague</i> experiencers are distinct types	78
	a. <i>Gai</i> -enabled experiencers.....	78
	b. <i>Risk</i> -enabled experiencers	78
	c. <i>Ma</i> -enabled experiencers	78
	Analysis of Finding I	78
	Finding II. First Occurances of <i>Fa'ñague</i> Are at a Young Age	79
	1. Findings from the online survey	80
	A. Age at first <i>fa'ñague</i> experience	80
	B. Steven.....	81
	C. James	81
	D. John	81
	2. Findings from the in-person interviews	81
	A. Tracey	81
	B. Theresa	82
	C. Xavier	82
	D. Bartholomew	83
	E. Marissa	83
	Analysis of Finding II	84
	Finding III. <i>Fa'ñague</i> Can be Shared by Multiple Experiencers	85
	1. Findings from the online survey	85
	A. Sara	85

B. Miguët	86
C. Oscar	86
2. Findings from the in-person interviews	87
A. Roy	87
B. Margaret	88
C. Marissa	90
D. Tom	91
Analysis of Finding III	93
Finding IV. <i>Fa'ñague</i> by <i>Taotao Mo'na</i> Occurs Only in Guam	95
1. Findings from the online survey	96
A. Ernesto	96
2. Findings from the in-person interviews	96
A. Tracey	96
B. Xavier	97
C. Bernardo	98
D. Bartholomew	99
Analysis of Finding IV	99
Finding V. <i>Fa'ñague</i> by <i>Difuntu</i> Can Be Experienced Anywhere	100
1. Findings from the online survey	100
A. Varied locations of <i>fa'ñague</i> by <i>difuntu</i>	101
B. John	101
C. Timothy	101
D. Edward	102
E. Bernice	102
2. Findings from the in-person interviews	102
A. Tracey	102
B. Elizabeth	102
C. Bernardo	103
D. Margaret	104
Analysis of Finding V	105
Finding VI. Chamorros Are Able to Immediately Recognize the Form of <i>Fa'ñague</i> Visitor	106
1. Findings from the online survey	106
A. The identity of the deceased in the <i>fa'ñague</i> event	106
B. The ability to differentiate between a ghost, spirit, or deceased individual	107
C. The sensory experiences in the <i>fa'ñague</i> event	107
D. Fear during the <i>fa'ñague</i> event	108
E. Comfort following the <i>fa'ñague</i> event	109
F. Messages relayed during the <i>fa'ñague</i> event	109
G. Antonia	110
H. Ignacio	110
I. Clara	110
J. Steven	110
K. Sara	111
2. Findings from the in-person interviews	111

A. Tracey	111
B. Margaret	111
C. Bartholomew	113
Analysis of Finding VI	113
Finding VII. <i>Fa'ñague</i> Can Occur Over an Individual's Lifetime and Any Time After the Death of the <i>Difuntu</i>	115
1. Results of the online survey	115
A. Age at first <i>fa'ñague</i> experience	115
B. Frequency of <i>fa'ñague</i> experiences	116
C. Timeframe of <i>fa'ñague</i> visits by a <i>difuntu</i>	116
D. Elena	117
E. Timothy	117
F. Ysrael	117
G. Lourdes	117
H. Ignacio	117
2. Findings from the in-person interviews	117
A. Elizabeth	117
B. Marissa	118
C. Albert	119
Analysis of Finding VII	120
Finding VIII. The Ability to Experience <i>Fa'ñague</i> is Inherited	120
1. Results of the online survey	121
A. First sources of <i>fa'ñague</i> knowledge	122
B. First sources of <i>fa'ñague</i> also experience it	122
C. <i>Fa'ñague</i> runs in the family	122
D. Oscar	123
E. Steven	123
F. Ernesto	124
2. Findings from in-person interviews	124
A. Roy	124
B. Bernardo	125
C. Margaret	126
D. Marissa	129
Analysis of Finding VIII	130
Coda: <i>Fa'ñague</i> Displays Fractal Characteristics	133
Anaysis and Discussion	136
I. Non-Native <i>Fa'ñague</i> Adaptations	136
II. Chamorro Post-Life Consciousness	138
III. Post-Life Societies	139
IV. The Effects of Environmental Change on <i>Fa'ñague</i>	140
V. The Lack of Conflict between <i>Fa'ñague</i> and Roman Catholicism	140
Future Research	142
Epilogue	144
References	146
Appendix A, IRB Research Approval	155
Appendix B, Informed Consent Form	156

Appendix C, Online Survey Questions	159
Appendix D, Interview Questions.....	165
Appendix E, Interview Transcripts	168
Roy (RD)	168
Bernardo (MK)	174
Ysabet (SK)	179
Margaret (PQ)	183
Marissa (SR)	196
Tom	206
Bartholomew (BN)	212

List of Figures

Figure 1. My re-imagination of Guam	12
Figure 2. Kosrae, Mt. Finkol, Sleeping Lady Mountain.	12
Figure 3. Kawagley's Tetrahedral	48
Figure 4. McGregor, et al., Ho'oulu Lahui Aloha	48
Figure 5. Mandelbrot and B. Norton. Computer graphic on photographic paper. 1983.....	50
Figure 6. An Escheresque Fractal by Peter Raedschelders	51
Figure 7. Purnell's Model of Cultural Competency	53
Figure 8. Ho's Atomic Model for Chamorro Ways of Knowing	54
Figure 9. Ho's Schema, Death	57
Figure 10. Ho's Schema, Child	57
Figure 11. A pair of Ho's Atomic Schema for Ocean and Health	58
Figure 12. A pair of Ho's Atomic Schema for Prayer and Animals	58
Figure 13. Responses: How old are you?.....	67
Figure 14. Responses: How "Chamorro" are you?	67
Figure 15. Responses: What state do you live in?	68
Figure 16. Traditional Research Format	70
Figure 17. Neo-Indigenous Research Format	71
Figure 18. "Difuntu" by Dan Ho.....	77
Figure 19. Responses: How old were you when you first experienced <i>fa'ñague</i> ?.....	80
Figure 20. "Taotao Mo'na" by Dan Ho	94
Figure 21. Responses: Where did the <i>fa'ñague</i> experience take place?	101
Figure 22. Responses: Did you know the deceased individual in your <i>fa'ñague</i> experience?	106
Figure 23. Responses: When you were visited, did you think it was a ghost, a poltergeist, an evil spirit or the deceased person?	107
Figure 24. Responses: What form did the deceased take during the <i>fa'ñague</i> experience?	107
Figure 25. Responses: Were you scared?	108
Figure 26. Responses: Did you feel a sense of comfort?	109
Figure 27. Responses: Did the deceased have a message for you?	109
Figure 28. Responses: How old were you when you first experienced <i>fa'ñague</i> ?.....	115
Figure 29. Responses: How often do you experience <i>fa'ñague</i> ?.....	116
Figure 30. Responses: How soon after death did the <i>fa'ñague</i> experience occur?	116
Figure 31. Responses: From whom did you first learn about <i>fa'ñague</i> ?	121
Figure 32. Responses: Did the person you learned <i>fa'ñague</i> from experience it as well	122
Figure 33. Responses: Does <i>fa'ñague</i> run in your family?	122
Figure 34. Ho's Atomic Model for Chamorro Ways of Knowing.....	124
Figure 35. "Duendes" by Dan Ho	128
Figure 36. Responses: How many other Chamorros do you know experience <i>fa'ñague</i> ?	133

List of Appendices

Appendix A, IRB Research Approval	155
Appendix B, Informed Consent Form	156
Appendix C, Online Survey Questions	159
Appendix D, Interview Questions	165
Appendix E, Interview Transcripts	168

Acknowledgments

To my parents, who hoped when they lived that I might one day be a doctor

How to Read This Work

This work was not easy to write for several reasons; therefore, I suspect it will be a challenge for you to immediately subscribe to the ideas and propositions I will set forth. I have spent my hours, days, months, and years making sure to rightly understand the established theories of the scientists, mathematicians, Indigenous scholars, writers and artists upon which I have built the arguments herein. I have made sure that my data instruments and protocols were employed under the strictest scrutiny, and have triple-checked all my transcriptions of observations in the field. I have reached out, reached in, fretted, and wept over these pages which have taken me over many thousand miles and many of my participants' lives in a way that has changed what I believe to be is my role as an Indigenous Chamorro scholar.

But, all the knowledge and wisdom I have gained in the process have not been shared until this very moment. As you read this, I would like to offer you three insights into how you, like me, can immerse yourself in the wisdom of the Ancient Chamorro experience of *fa'ñague*.

Insight 1: Suspend Your Disbelief

I owe these three words to Michael Koskey, a professor of Cross-Cultural Studies I was so lucky to study under at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I took from him two courses, one of which was Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights. It was often that he would advise us to “suspend your disbelief.” We were, after all, novices in taking on huge ideas related to the differences in the concept of value between the Western world and the Native Mind. The topics ranged from the rights to extremely tangible sacred shrunken skulls of Ancient tribes, to the more abstract spiritual personifications of Māori

riverbeds in New Zealand, to the microscopic genetic material of the Havasupai in Arizona. Mike was acutely aware that we might be slightly skeptical, even if we were, in fact, of Indigenous heritage.

This first insight — suspend your disbelief — goes out not only to those of a mostly non-Native experience, but especially those of my own Native one, the Chamorro people, and those who feel they know about Chamorro culture. You may find that I write things that you may not agree with, or had heard differently, but I assure you that as a Chamorro-speaking Native (and there are not many of us left), I have done my best to be true to the Native spirit. Guam is in the midst of a cultural rebirth; what remains of our authentic Indigenous past is mostly linguistic, which I have already stated is sparse. Our archeological story is mostly told and endorsed by outsiders and scientists who are dismissive of our Native thoughts and ideas that are inherently a part of our worldview. Our Indigenous spirituality has been diluted by Roman Catholicism, and our island lives hybridized and homogenized into the blur of American society. So, to you, I say, keep an open mind and heart.

Insight 2: Understand the Work of the Indigenous Scholar Today

In this dissertation, I reference several scholars who (along with others I have not mentioned) became the foundation for my own efforts. You will encounter in the following pages surnames such as Kawagley, Smith, John, Barnhardt, Pahima, Meyer, and Wilson, all of whom are scholars in the field of Indigenous studies. You will also notice Nagaoka, Rutherford, and Bohr from the world of physics. From mathematics, Mandlebrot; from philosophy, Descartes; from nursing, Purnell; and from Greek literature, Homer; as well as other noted authors. In addition, I use the wisdom of the

many giants of research theory who have established honored practices in quantitative and qualitative analysis.

As I see it, it appears as though the recent generation of Indigenous scholars were so activated by Smith's notions of cultural decolonization, that there is a certain bulk of the opera that stays confined to almost purely Indigenous theory, in all its marvelous abstractions. I have found, particularly when expressing a Chamorro epistemology, that I must engage as wide an audience as possible; indeed, to speak with a tangible science, and Western *dialect* to better and clearer inform my Native cosmology. As I ponder it, I realize that this approach may very well be a prudent one when expressing ideas of Native wisdom that may be difficult to articulate to non-Native audiences.

Perhaps we may call my position *Neo-Indigenous Methodology*.

In truth, there is not much epistemological work on the Chamorro way of knowing. Certainly, we have several historians who curate words, artifacts, traditional practices, and language. But do we have truly defined philosophies that the world can learn from a book, or paper? One that can be used in classrooms alongside the philosophies of China and Japan, or theories by Kant and St. Augustine? Probably not. Can we, or any other obscure culture use *known* ways of thinking to explain a yet-to-be discovered Native way of thinking? I believe so. It is my absolute hope that other scholars who emerge from cultures considered too abstract or insignificant for academia exploit knowledge that is known to shine light upon their Indigenous cosmologies. In my estimation, the road to understanding and empathy may be paved with as many supporting substrates and layers as possible.

My work, as an Indigenous scholar, is to expand what my intellectual forbearers in this field have established, and co-opt the popular scholarly dialect into a cohesive whole. There was a point in my life where I used to be satisfied saying, “There is no such way to translate this or that into English.” While that remains true, I find that my greater role compels me to embrace the impossible — to bring my Native, beautiful, obscure knowledge system, to its proper place among the better-known cultures of the world.

Insight 3: Allow for a Non-Traditional Scholarly Form

Rather than state that I chose to present the findings of my research before the results portion of this dissertation, I need to say that, organically, it made absolute sense. I understand that most dissertations are organized in the reverse, and I accept that your initial reaction to my work may be one of incredulity. I assure you that I have compared drafts of the traditional form to my finished one, and the latter serves the research much better with regard to logical and narrative flow.

Insight 4: Listen to the Page

I have often been guilty of simply reading the words of Indigenous scholars and writers, keeping their experience at a safe emotional distance. My eyes scan for verbs first, then nouns and modifiers to paint a picture of the writer’s ideas. I once believed that a thorough reading was enough of an investment to receive the stories and philosophies of other cultures through the eyes of one of their very own. I was wrong.

A few years ago, I encountered the work of Shawn Wilson, a Cree scholar who wrote the book *Research is Ceremony*. After reading it, I dismissed it completely because what I encountered sort of turned me off. He opened his work with written letters to his young sons about where they were conceived. I thought to myself, “This is TMI (too

much information), cheesy, and irrelevant for a book on Indigenous research.” But something made me revisit the book over and over. I felt I was missing the point of his work because I had been so caught up in what I simply *read*. Over my subsequent readings, I made myself listen to the pages, and only by doing so was I able to appreciate it, understand his point of view, and learn from it. In fact, he is one of the authors I reference in this dissertation.

I ask that you read my words to summon the voice embedded in these pages. This is not new information to you, if you really think about it. I cannot imagine reading Virginia Woolf, for example, without hearing the sounds of people talking, walking and running, doors opening and shutting, cars motoring, and the very breath of Mrs. Dalloway as she walks briskly to a London florist in the opening pages (1925). How the sounds from the page change when she steps off the cobblestones of Westminster into the cool, opulent seclusion of the flower shop, thick with the damp, odorous scent of blooms. Woolf’s words alone cannot summon such an experience unless my eyes interact with my mind’s ears. Neither can I not hear the winds from the north that blow ferociously in the descriptions of cherished Yup’ik dance choreography described by Theresa John. This experience is entirely up to the reader. I invite you to do the same as you read about the Chamorro worldview I present here.

Guam: A Personification

...it yet assuredly seems impossible ever to persuade infidels of the qualities of any religion, or almost any moral virtue, unless first of all, those two things be proved to them by natural reason.

(René Descartes, 1641)

I would be remiss to proceed with this work without first offering a *whole* telling of my birthplace, Guam. Although this research is built upon longstanding and highly respected conceptual and theoretical frameworks, not doing so would be in error. In the first place, it would also be the highest form of dishonor for me, as a Native Chamorro from Guam, to introduce my island as a practiced, predictable reference in a footnote or paragraph, and continue with my scholarly work as though Guam were an anonymous participant in this work. Secondly, it would be the ultimate disservice to the reader had I not clarified the *meaning* of Guam, as its name, in common parlance, has sadly become a descriptor of a dire displacement.

As a child, I would hear Johnny Carson mock Guam as a place of desolation. As an adult, David Letterman would do the same (Cabrera, 2010). More recently, a certain United States Congressman feared that funding a military buildup would cause the island to tip over and sink into the Pacific Ocean (Condon, 2010). President Obama, himself, after reneging on a visit to Guam in 2010 (Bower, 2010), had the opportunity to bond with the islanders on two-hour stopover in 2011 (Pacific News Center, 2011). All that was required of him was to stand at the airplane's door and wave to the crowd. Instead, he chose to remain on the Air Force One, preventing the media from making Guam relevant, in this case, in the forum of climate change. Given these examples, the West's

first impression of Guam has become quite the hurdle to clear for any Chamorro attempting to place Guam into the contemporary conversation.

To this day, I find myself responding to the question, “Where are you from?” with an inflection that proposes I am, myself, unsure. “*Guam?*” I catch myself answering. Most children in my generation and others that flank it, subconsciously voice their answer with this ascending *glissando*, as if they are seeking permission to say the word, Guam. It is a perplexing acknowledgement that in the vast expanse to our physical (and cultural) west, Guam exists merely as a punch-line on late-night television, as a presidential re-fueling stop, and under a deluge of misinformed sound bites in hearsay and the media. Against these seemingly insurmountable mind blocks, the Native voice and story of the Chamorro people remains mostly unheard.

If I am being completely honest, I have long abandoned humoring the questions that follow: “Where is it?”, “What is a person from Guam called?”, “What language do you speak?”, “Is Guam near Guatemala?”, “How did you get here?”, and “Where did you learn to speak English so well?” My recent position is that if the inquisitor is that interested, they can Google it. Further, had they not known where Guam was, what a Native of the island is called, what is the mother tongue, etc., then they probably were never interested in knowing to begin with. I’m not here, and Guam does not exist, to fill the dead space in casual conversation.

Another point before I continue. I have long pondered what methodologies ought to be employed by new Indigenous scholars in the telling of culture, particularly our own. In my early studies, it seemed as though my intellectual forbearers approached their work in an activist manner, that the theme running through their papers and books carried a

concentrated, decolonizing tone. A generation or two later, it seems (to me, at least) that an evolution is in order; specifically, the Indigenous scholar should embrace all methods they are able to, from all disciplines to tell our stories. In the first place, sticking to a strict category of “Indigenous” scholarship limits how others may perceive our work, making it less approachable as a serious and *bona fide* reference across other disciplines. Secondly, we need to talk less to ourselves (preach to the choir), and more to a wider audience. It must be our duty to make Indigenous stories as usable in any platform and expression of sociology, philosophy, politics, economy, science, math, and the arts. To be clear, I am not saying that we dilute our stories, or dumb them down so that others might hear them. Rather, it is that we accept and exploit our understanding of “their” paradigms to educate “them.” They, who cling to empirically chosen facts, who are dubious of how we transmit, keep and verify wisdom.

In any case, facts are a curious thing. They are made infallible by a select group of people (usually outside researchers), using methods that do not align with the culture it seeks to study (science) and made dogma by a certain set of politics (publishing). After all this bureaucracy, it becomes quite easy to describe Guam’s presence in the world as 13.4443° N, 144.7937° E. Many scientific papers cite these coordinates when researching Guam. Lately, it has become a stamp on urban-style clothing favored by local designers. A Native way of knowing, however, urges us to think beyond these coordinates, and rightly so. If you think about it, these numbers mark an end, more than a beginning. There is much more to Guam to consider beyond where it lies along latitudinal and longitudinal axes.

That said, I would like now to give a revelation of Guam that is as close to the Ancient instruction as I can sense, indeed, to *personify* Guam. I will structure this telling by borrowing the thoughts of René Descartes' from his *Meditations on the First Philosophy*, and deliver a story of Guam modeled upon the triumvirate of body, mind and spirit. I will use “Her” and “She” to refer to Guam. She is, after all, the mother of all things of Guam. A crucial gist of Indigenous thought is that the Native place is the source of life; the land — as female — is an idea that literally bookends the islands of Micronesia beginning in the east (Guam) and ending in Kosrae, the westernmost of our islands.

I. Her Body: The Island

The geology of Guam suggests a heritage of duality, a theme She has passed on to Her Chamorro children, and one that I rely on repeatedly to enhance the arguments of this research. Hard archeological evidence suggests that Chamorros in Guam date back 3500 years, although Paleo-environmental studies push this figure to 4300 years (Pregill and Steadman, 2009). This collected data speaks to a torso; Her northern half, a knife-sharp karst plateau that science surmises was a submerged reef in the early Miocene epoch. At her waist, this composition changes abruptly to a volcanic extraction. Below her belt is a verdant undulation of grassland, valleys, and mountains that spill into bays fringed by reefs in the Philippine Sea to the west. Across her thighs, her eastern coastline faces the relentless depths of the Pacific Ocean.

She is our Mother. Some say She looks like a fish from the air; I rather envision Her as a woman in odalisque repose, her arms eternally cradling the landmass, her hair tossed by the tides and wind. The island itself is a child she holds upon her, keeping it

safe and dry. I propose this image based on our own Chamorro linguistic “facts.” Our language holds keys that support this *idea de corpore*, as Descartes might say. To wit, in the north, where her neck might be, is the village *Yigo*, which in the Native term *yigu*, refers to a frame to wear over one’s neck to carry things. The name of the capital city of *Hagåtña* derives from *haga*, blood, and is placed at the location of Her heart. Northeast of *Hagåtña*, the mountain, *Barrigada*, is a form of the Native, *baligada*, meaning “breast.” In the south, about at the hip, lies the village *Inalåhan*, which is an approximation of “a place where many people are, or come from” (Finohaya, 2013). In the same way, Western archeologists rely on solid remnants of pottery and bone to paint a picture of our Indigenous people, Chamorros may absolutely use our oral artifacts, their meanings and implications to summon the understanding of our belief systems. In my case, I have reimagined Guam as a personification of our Ancient mother, ever keeping to Her people perched securely above the darkest depths of the Pacific Ocean.

It must be repeated that this image of Guam is my own, and though it is based on Native wisdom and science, it is hardly definitive, nor should it be. Guam, Herself, is geologically diverse. So, too, must be all life and ideas that come from Her, most especially the Native voices. Many Indigenous people today are unsure of precisely how our ancestors actualized their views of life, so today we rely on the cultural elements that remain. Some Natives are endowed with great inventories of language, Ancient tools, dance, and song. In Guam, however, five centuries of European, Japanese, and American occupation and diaspora have diminished our people’s hold on an agreed-upon cosmology. We are most certainly at the beginning of a cultural rebirth, holding fiercely on and building upon what little of ourselves that remains.

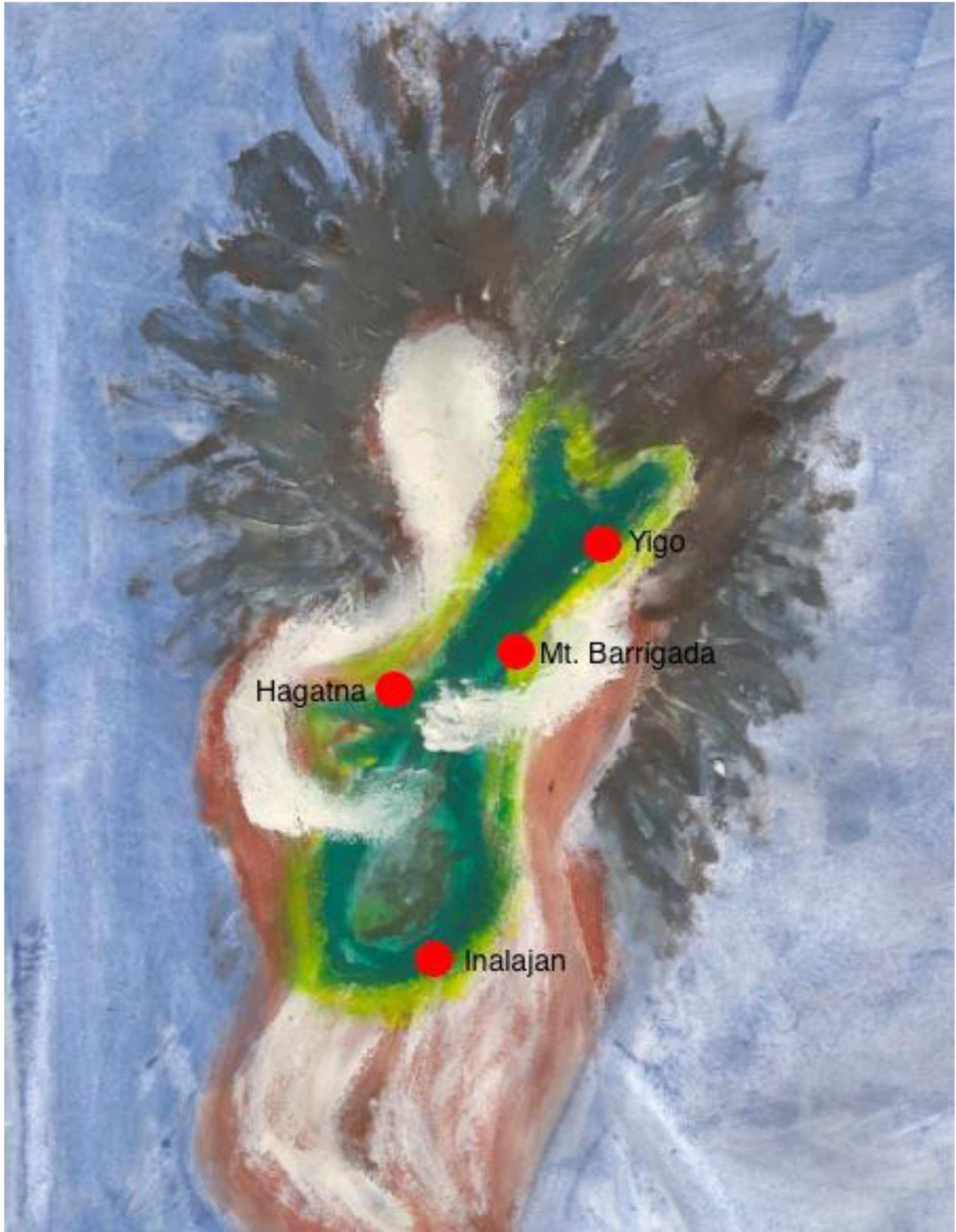


Figure 1. My re-imagination of Guam



Figure 2. Kosrae, Mt. Finkol, Sleeping Lady Mountain. (Photo: A. George)

Yet, a little bit is quite enough. Within the cultural theoretic collective is an idea that suggests holography is an appropriate application with which to analyze culture. Science tells us that a holographic file provides a complete picture (although from a different perspective) of the original image even if it is damaged. In addition to words, I also maintain that mathematics can do the same thing. Why not? If we can discern laws that lead us to calculating unknown quantities from scant measures such as an angle, or a side, certainly, Indigenous scholarship can take the same position. In fact, it is not so much that we can, we *should*. *We must*. We owe it to our cultures and to intellectuals who came before us. Oscar Kawagley blazed the trail to allow us to analyze our own cultures,

departing from the longstanding idea that cultural research must be conducted (and therefore opined upon) by a neutral outsider (1995). Linda Smith called upon the Indigenous researcher to challenge the politics of institutionalized research, and to strive for intellectual self-determination within the politics of scholarship (Smith, 1999). What now do we do with these? We move forward, empowered and impassioned, to overcome the limitations held by the widespread notion that “science is reason.”

II. Her Mind: The Chamorro People

Descartes argues that the body exists separately from the mind, that the body itself does not think — in fact, that the mind is what makes things exist. While a mind-less body can exist without thought or conscience, it does not perceive or conceive of ideas; rather, it simply survives without consequence for as long as it can. By contrast, the mind is what gives all life meaning.

This an interesting proposition for Indigenous scholars to ponder, especially when science wishes to demolish the meaning we hold in our minds about our people. While the artifacts exhumed by archeologists speak to our ancestors’ way of physically surviving, they are meaningless without our mind’s connection to them. We are faced constantly with science upending what our Native minds tell us, for example, through genetic research. When scientists recently revealed a genetic “origin” of the Chamorro people in Taiwan, it negatively affected our people’s perception and analysis of our Ancient culture. While there may be material (bodily) similarities between Chamorros and Taiwan Native tribes that geneticists have proved, we are most certainly not of the same cultural mind.

Yet, DNA poses a specific challenge to articulating a Native identity. To scientists, this poetic, molecular structure holds the ultimate truth of man and his origins; and to many, understanding and manipulating it is a pursuit of the highest, most noble order as it seeks to benefit all of mankind. Yet, to the Native, there is no such altruistic magnificence to be had by gene science, most especially if it is their genes under someone else's microscope. This is not to say that Native cultures have not understood the advantages of genes and manipulating them. At the same time the father of genetics, Gregor Mendel, was "discovering" and experimenting gene phenomena on pea plants, Hawaiians had already built a sizable inventory of genetically modified plants over many earlier generations (Palmer, 2001). In the intangible realm, Native people have long developed methods to know and keep *what is in their blood* by means of language, myth, tradition, and practices that proved and sustained their uniqueness. But genetic science threatens a horrifying "ultimate colonization," a laboratory-defined (therefore definitive) pronouncement on the origin of the Native (Gardner, n.d.). Worse, through manipulation itself, it threatens to deconstruct and reconstruct Native genetic matter into trademarked matter that obscures the Native gene and the Native's right to control it.

I propose that Guam's *mind* are Her people. It is Her people that give meaning and ideas that become the Chamorro culture. The ideas and beliefs are based on Her body, the island. On the whole, we are people who use very little to say so much (again, the duality). In fact, it is not that our language has its particular terms that identify universal ideas, such as *run*, *write*, *sun*, *moon*, *fish*, etc.; rather, we have "words" otherwise known as modifiers in the form of suffixes, infixes, and suffixes that infuse meaning into words and make them uniquely Chamorro. In most cases, these "fixes"

have two letters or less, and rarely more than one syllable. It is these seemingly insignificant elements that bring the cosmology of the Chamorros to life.

One of these modifiers is *ye*, sometimes *ge* or simply *e*. When incorporated into a term, it puts it to work; in other words, it gives the word purpose beyond its meaning. Consider for example, the word, *sangan*, (to say). When *e* is added to the end, an individual(s) to whom the words are directed is identified. *Sangane* is alive, even though *sangan* is, itself, a verb (in the Western world). In the Native worldview, *sangan* is passive. *Sangane*, however, has a pulse that suggests an exchange of ideas, a perpetuation of culture and beliefs, and fears and hopes for the future.

Ha is another modifier worth considering. *Guahu* is the Native term for “I.” *Guahu 'ha* means “I, alone,” or “I am alone.” There is a profound difference in *guahu* when it is modified by *ha*. “I” is benign. In the West, it is a pronoun indicating the self. In Chamorro, the addition of *ha* communicates both the heroic self, while, at the same time, the self, bereft of camaraderie and compassion. Similarly, *ña* carries dual meaning. It is a modifier that at once separates and attributes. When added to *takilu* (tall), *takiluña* can mean an individual’s singular height, or that he or she is the tallest in the group.

There are many more examples from the language that highlight this duality, this enhancement of terms by minute elements, but there is other evidence more tangible to this particular worldview. The signature monolith of the Marianas Islands is the latte. The latte feature a large vertical limestone pillar topped by basin of a much greater diameter. Chamorros use the same word for a small drinking vessel and the large basin of the latte, *tasa*. Our word *mo 'na*, is used interchangeably to indicate future or past. *Dekka* can mean both a loving, gentle pinch, and a malicious punch. *Masa* is used to describe

the ripe juiciness of fruit, or that an infection has dried up. In the Chamorro Native world, the parsimony of vocabulary does not in any way indicate a limited breadth of ideas. In fact, intention and situation give meaning to the words we use. Historically, particularly to Europeans and Americans, Chamorros were not to be trusted. We have a language with dual meaning, yes, but it is only confusing to colonizers.

In addition to words, our food reflects the delight of conflict. We prefer broth when it is cooked dry. *Apan* is a traditional method of cooking a stew until it evaporates dry, rendering its solid contents moist and infused with flavor. We use this method for fruit and vegetables in coconut broth, such as breadfruit (*lemai apan*), bananas (*aga apan*), taro or tapioca (*sunì apan or mendioka apan*). As a child, I was taught that the mangoes with the most scabs, or dried patches of skin, yielded the sweetest fruit. I also developed a taste for combining salt with the heat of piquant peppers. Every child in Guam automatically prepares hot red peppers crushed in salt as a dip for freshly picked fruit.

The most important part of the day is neither day nor night, it is the *sireno*. Children are taught to avoid the outdoors at the twilight as it was alive with contagion. Says Fr. Eric Forbes (2011) in his well read blog:

Sireno is taken from the Spanish word *sereno*, which means several things, but one of them is “the night dew.” For Chamorros, the *sireno* is that time after sunset all the way till dawn, when the cool night air is said to bring illness.

Chamorros are very aware of the differences between the heat of the day and the cool of the night, and believe that moving from one extreme to the other is bad for

our health. Even today, going from the air-conditioned car or room to the heat of the outdoors is routinely blamed for colds, coughs and flus (Paleric, 2011).

Certainly, there are far more examples from the Chamorro culture that can support my arguments here, but this effort is not meant to catalogue the language and cultural practices of my island. I have done so to craft an idea of the Chamorro mind, the Chamorro people, that speaks to a connection with the Native land, and how it is articulated by a repeated theme of duality. Indeed, the island is one composition in the north, and quite another in the south. Her western half rests in the shallows of a fringing reef, while her east coast is lapped by treacherously deep waters that regularly swallow individuals who simply stand on the shoreline. It makes complete sense that Her people carry a worldview flush with *double entendre*. What to others seems ambiguous and confusing, to Chamorros is quite natural.

III. Her Soul: The Chamorro Culture

Defining soul is an effort nearly as old as humankind itself, one that is fraught with uncertainty. Descartes himself seems unresolved with whether his philosophy of mind versus body could actually mean soul versus body. In his life, he was compelled to answer his critics over a series of published meditations about, among other things, what he believed of and about the soul. My own personal opinion is that he succumbed at some point to using it under the same pressure perhaps as we, today, adopt a trendy term for an old idea. Plato, Aristotle, Socrates all analyzed the soul before Descartes, and because of this, the Western world has adopted it to mean several things. Essentially, one can summarize the history of soul “talk” into this: The soul is a spiritual organ that is immortal and lives beyond the body, which in life, can be affected, hurt, and delighted by

secularisms ranging from food to music, color to rhetoric, and forms of spiritual practices and beliefs.

Guam's soul, therefore, is the Chamorro culture. What are the elements of Guam's culture? I could easily list pages and pages of song, dance, foods, clothing, pottery, religion, architecture, literature, art, and floriography to prove that there is Chamorro culture worth studying, cherishing, and experiencing. But to do so would be a waste of paper, ink, time, and scholarly effort, both yours and mine. The perceivable Chamorro culture today is a mish-mosh of many influences: European, Asian, and American. It is also influenced by other Pacific cultures of Polynesia and Micronesia. What "may" be authentically Chamorro are Ancient monolithic ruins and a language that is used mostly on t-shirts and signage, and increasingly less in conversation and formal communication.

The truth is, if you watched a video of modern Chamorros today in their homes, you would be hard-pressed to accurately guess whether they are in Guam or in California. The décor is the same, the clothing is the same, the American accent is the same. The people will not be readily recognized as Chamorro — to most people they will appear Polynesian, Filipino, Malaysian, Puerto Rican, Mexican, African-American, or White (yes, some of us can look quite Caucasian). If you peered into our schools, you'd find the same classroom that you would anywhere in the United States. Our business districts include a K-Mart and high-end hotels, and boutiques filled with luxury goods from Paris. Our courts are founded on the American judicial system. There is a Starbucks.

Yet, a culture that is distinctly Chamorro exists, and its core is one that I will argue in the forthcoming chapters. It is one that I can tell you is exclusively Native to me

and other Chamorros. One that thrives, even though the Her mind (the Chamorro people) has separated from Her body (Guam, the island).

The Research

I. Introduction

This research project investigates a particular feature of the Chamorro culture known as *fa'ñague*, or communication with the dead. It seeks to understand the roots of this tradition, where it places in the field of Indigenous death beliefs, and why, despite the loss of much of Chamorro tradition and language, it survives among the Natives both on the island and who dispersed into the western United States.

The rationale for this project derives from my personal life, which I will explain shortly, and my professional hopes. I hope this work becomes a vital addition to the field of Indigenous knowledge and its systems of knowing, particularly within the scholarly literature and research relating to Micronesian culture. My literature review will source death and post-life beliefs from other cultures in order to create a context and rationale for the wisdom, questions, and axiological considerations of Chamorro belief systems. This context relies on surveying the ontologies of the afterlife among a selection of other Indigenous cultures, and their accompanying epistemologies. Finally, my research method is based on a mixed (or blended) methodology employing several social-science research theories coupled with quantitative analysis. Its instruments include interviews conducted in Guam in the Native language, and an online survey designed for Chamorro Natives among the diaspora in the United States mainland.

II. Rationale: A Personal Story

December 7, 1971. A first grader, I awake in the early morning to an empty house, thinking nothing of how odd this was for a residence of ten people. My parents, maternal grandparents and six siblings live in relative harmony for as long as I can remember, except for my grandfather's occasional drunken drama. To be sure, he was always drunk, but had the good sense to be so away from the house. My grandmother lay motionless in bed from a stroke for the years they lived with us. I remember her as lively and funny when I was a very young toddler, when she came over to watch my baby brother and me while my parents worked.

Sleepily, I walk outside and find my siblings sitting in a row under an eave of galvanized metal. Tears stream down their faces, dripping from their eyes the same way rain rolled through the troughs of the tin roof. I count four of them. My baby brother is missing. Where is he? I panic, wondering what could have happened to him. Then, in an instant, I hear it. The awful sound of my mother wailing. I look around into the part of the house where her cries are coming from, and see my dad walk out with my little brother in his arms. A sense of relief washes over me — but why is my mother screaming? I look at my older siblings. One of them says lowly, “*Nana* is dead.”

I quickly take my place on the bench under the rusting eave, and wait silently for our mother to come to us. When she does, after what seems like a lifetime of wails, she tells us, “*Nana* might visit you, but don't be scared.” At age six, my life becomes one that Chamorros before me have lived: A life with my dead relatives. Since then, I have recognized aunts, uncles, grandparents, my parents and a sibling after they stopped breathing.

I experience *fa'ñague*. This is, in part, what makes me Chamorro, what makes all Chamorros *Chamorro*. I have known many friends and relatives who share similar stories. As an Indigenous researcher, I am curious to know why *fa'ñague* continues among modern Chamorros, particularly those who do not live in Guam, practice traditional burial rites, or even speak our language. Why the “lack” of Native culture and displacement seem to pose no barrier to this Ancient spirituality. This is, essentially, my research question.

Fa'ñague appears *not* to be place-specific, or a situational behavior. My grandfather has spent some time with me in his post-life since I was a college freshman in Chicago. When my father died in 2004, he put his arm over my shoulders when I returned home from Maine for his funeral. In Maine, as he passed into the afterlife, he cried with me — I cried in his voice. My older brother, who expired as I held him, stayed with me while I took his place as the older male son. My mother, nine months before this writing, succumbed like her mother before her after a decade of being bedridden and disabled by complications from a stroke. She comes to me when I speak our Native language, particularly when I'm praying, or joking. When she lived, we had a contentious, sometimes estranged relationship. But we share a wicked wit. Still.

III. Research Questions

I propose to explore the place of *fa'ñague* in the modern Chamorro cosmology. I am specifically interested in (1) how *fa'ñague* continues to exist at a time when language use is severely diminished and when traditional death practices have fallen away in favor of Christian burials and American mortuary practices. Absent tradition, (2) how might *fa'ñague* be transmitted from generation to generation and person to person? (3) What

does today's Chamorro expect their *fa'ñague* experience to be? (4) How is the *fa'ñague* experience influenced by media and popular culture, i.e., horror movies, ghost stories, etc.? (5) How does the *fa'ñague* experience differ between Natives who live in Guam, and those who live in other places in the U.S. mainland? I am interested in understanding the form of the *fa'ñague*, whether it is visual, aural, or other sensory experience. Finally, I will try to understand how individuals *know* that they have experienced an actual *fa'ñague*, and how they distinguish it from other extra-worldly experiences either influenced by Chamorro tradition, American popular culture, or both.

IV. Conceptual Framework and Methodology

In this research, I will be guided, first and foremost, by Grounded Theory, so that I am able to derive theory and knowledge from “data and then illustrate by characteristic examples” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Further, I propose to analyze *fa'ñague* through a lens that draws from Cultural Theory as described by Smith (2000), and Dual-Inheritance Theory defined by Heinrich and McElreath (2007). I will employ qualitative discourse analysis and phenomenological exercises according to Starks and Trinidad (2007), but within an Indigenous research paradigm suggested by Shawn Wilson (2008). Wilson suggests that among Indigenous communities, the line between ontology and epistemology blurs. This resonates with me. He goes on to write that Indigenous research recognizes relationalities. Starks and Trinidad's discourse emphasizes language, characters and how the story is told; their model of phenomenology stresses commonality of different experiences. Ultimately, I hope to artfully use this mix of methods to explain *fa'ñague* as I have expressed using numerical data, observation, participation, and sharp induction.

1. Cultural theory.

The anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn in 1952 identified six definitions of culture, two of which I am referring to here. The first of these is *Psychological Definitions*, which defines culture's role as a "problem solving device" that enables individuals and groups to learn, analyze, and satisfy emotional needs. The second, *Genetic Definitions*, has little to do with biology (although fifty-percent of Dual-Inheritance Theory, which I reference here, is genetics). Rather, Emile Durkheim explains how elements of a culture arise from human interaction or continue "to exist as a product of intergenerational transmission" (Smith, 2000).

The cornerstones of cultural/social theory are forged primarily on philosophies of economies, markets, and consumption, particularly in the work of Marx, Weber and Simmel. Again, Durkheim is often mentioned along with these authors, and his contribution to cultural theory is appropriate for my research. Specifically, he defines in his doctoral thesis, *The Division of Labor in Society*, that *collective conscience* arises from an organic solidarity in culture, which approximates tolerance for individual beliefs. This allows for a shared morality and emotions within a society unlike within a mechanical solidarity wherein all people operate robotically, thinking and behaving alike (Durkheim, 1984). He distinguishes *anomie* from *social fact*, *anomie* being a weakened state in society due to the lack of subscription to a belief by a culture, and *social fact*, a palpable, predicable condition resulting from a wholesale subscription to a phenomenon. There appears to be no *anomie* in Chamorro culture that diminishes *fa'ñague*. It is arguable that its tenants are a *social fact* in Chamorro society. Conversely, Durkheim writes *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, which suggests that *ritual* fulfills a society's

hunger for the sacred and creates a *collective effervescence* that maintains belief. It seems worthwhile to examine the collective effervescence surrounding *fa'ñague* though (or precisely because) it lacks traditional ritual practice either in Guam or (less) in locations of the diaspora. (Durkheim, 2008).

2. Dual-inheritance theory.

Many Indigenous people like to explain that their beliefs and traditions are “in their blood.” Certainly, as I have pondered my research questions, I nearly always arrive at the same conclusion, that *fa'ñague* might be part of a genetic predisposition among Chamorros that has articulated itself over time. Heinrich and McElreath (2007) propose an appropriate model:

For example, suppose the practice of cooking meat spread by social learning in ancestral human populations. In an environment of ‘cooked meat,’ natural selection may favor genes that shorten our energetically costly intestines and alter our digestive chemistry. Such a reduction of digestive tissue may have freed up energy for more ‘brain building.’ In this way, human biology is adapting to culturally transmitted behavior (Heinrich and McElreath, 2007).

Rowthorn (2011) offers:

People who carry a certain ‘religiosity’ gene are more likely than average to become or remain religious...A child who is genetically predisposed towards religion is more likely than other children to remain or become religious as an adult (Rowthorn, 2011).

To be sure, this study will not feature in its design any protocol that resembles quantitative, genetic testing. Again, this theory serves my project best as a lens. In the

best-case scenario, the data gathered may encourage future study of the biological factors of *fa'ñague* by Indigenous researchers from the field of science.

Heinrich and McElreath differentiate the types of social learning, or as other authors call it, “imitation”; they use the term “conformity.” *Informational conformity* is a type of learning where the individual, because a phenomenon or behavior in their society is more than they can mentally and emotionally process, adopts the belief. By contrast, *normative conformity* is “conformity for the purposes of going along with the group to avoid appearing deviant.” Individuals who imitate in this way often do not change their underlying beliefs. They simply want to fit in. This is a model that is appropriate to the study of *fa'ñague* as I have proposed.

Rubinstein (1983) who tracked suicide rates in the Micronesian islands of Chuuk and the Marshall Islands offers an interesting model that is worth emulating. He proposes that suicide is strongly influenced by imitation; in fact, that it can cause a behavior to spread in as though it were an epidemic. He used classical models of disease tracking which may prove appropriate in my analysis of *fa'ñague*, particularly within the diaspora. More importantly, he documented that often, Micronesian suicide victims were visited by the deceased before their final acts. This offers an interesting correlation.

3. Qualitative discourse and phenomenology.

I conducted interviews and conversations in the Native Chamorro style that incorporates *komplimentu*, or as Shawn Wilson might put it, “ceremony.” *Komplimentu* is a formal interaction that involves offering tribute to Elders in the form of praise, gifts, and/or favors. This practice encourages a more honest and vivid conversation. My other sources included *Estorian* or *Kanta Chamorrta*, which is a type of storytelling in which

the storyteller assumes two or more characters in the story, the latter in the form of song. Sometimes the storyteller will encourage the audience (interviewer) to participate as another character. *Kasi* is a lively “teasing” conversation that may involve shouting or calling that outsiders might consider hurtful or a form of bullying. In truth, it is a way for Chamorros to commemorate and compliment the dead. It is most often heard at rosaries following a death or at funeral receptions and undertaken by the generation preceding the Elder group.

V. Research Approval

This research project had been approved by the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institutional Review Board (IRB) on October 25, 2016. (See Appendix A).

VI. Research Instruments

1. Interview questions.

I created questions to be asked in interviews to be conducted in the Native Chamorro language in Guam. I believed that by exchanging ideas in the Native language, I would be able to gather deeper and more specific descriptions of *fa'ñague* experiences by descendants living in Guam. (See Appendix B).

2. Online survey.

I created a website at www.ChamorroCulture.com to host a survey for Chamorros living in the United States. I limited this survey to displaced Chamorros to ensure that their participation had minimal interaction with an interviewer who might sway them to believe that they experienced *fa'ñague* by imitation, rather than by an actual encounter they believed to be valid. (See Appendix C).

VII. Research Statement

Fa'ñague is a topic that deserves scholarly analysis. I feel it is my duty to contribute to the scholarly works of my Chamorro brothers and sisters. As no study that I know of on this topic exists, I feel it can be well-received and useful to other researchers who are researching Indigenous death practices and spirituality, their origins, functions, and survival. I can see how this project can set the stage for my own future research in post-death epistemologies across Micronesia.

Review of Literature

I. The Strategy

Essentially, this review of literature focuses on three areas: (1) A survey of post-life beliefs in Guam and among some Indigenous cultures; (2) How people have historically sensed visitations from the afterlife; and (3) Why a mixed methodology is appropriate for understanding *fa'ñague*.

Ultimately, this research strives to place Chamorro post-life beliefs solidly within the lexicon of spirit traditions that are well-known among the scholarly works of Indigenous knowledge systems. As of this writing, this particular niche has not yet been carved out for the Chamorro view, owing to many factors: Foreign, sometimes hostile colonialization, religious coups which replaced Native beliefs, loss of Native language use, and the lack of written historical documentation that could serve to keep ages-old tradition in the forefront of modern thought. There has been very little scholarly work in the fields of anthropology and archeology that might assist the publishing of Chamorro post-life beliefs in formats acceptable to either scholars of Indigenous knowledge or the

general public. Hopefully the questions, research, and arguments posed in this effort can begin to change that.

In truth, the areas of Chamorro cosmology that address spirituality or post-life consciousness lack any kind of anthropomorphic or phantasmagoric element, which can make it less fantastic or interesting to some. The Chamorro dead do not become spirits in the form of noble animals and other non-human beings. Nor do they transform into magical, heightened versions of their living selves. Rather, they remain *people*. In fact, the Chamorro creation myth is quite mundane. In our creation myth, *Punta* and *Fu'una* are merely a man and a woman — hardly fantastic, powerful entities that may be found in other Indigenous stories.

The closest approximation to “ghost” or “spirit” in the Chamorro language is *Taotao 'Mo'na*. *Taotao* is the human person, or people. It is sometimes used to refer to a person's physical stature or being. *Mo'na* can mean either past or future. In this way, there is no distinction in form between persons who are dead or who will be born. Yet *Taotao 'Mo'na* does not feature in *fa'ñague*. In the Chamorro culture, people are people, whether they are breathing or not. The living's relationship with the dead is entirely person-to-person. This is a vast departure from what one might expect in the known world of Indigenous Pacific traditions where ancestors are mountains, such as *Pele* in Hawai'i, rivers to the Māori, (Pahima, 1997), or non-human entities to some Alaskan groups (John, 2010). It is this distinction that this paper aims to mark, together with the cultural factors that maintain *fa'ñague* in the modern world.

II. A Survey of Some Post-Life Beliefs

There is a real pragmatism to believing that in death, there is a sustained

interaction that remains among the living. Wisdom is preserved and evolves in a continuum that supersedes a life cycle. There exists a bank of knowledge that survives the decay of artifact and documentation. Certainly, the Chamorros of Guam rely on their deceased relatives to remain as family members with whom they consult on a regular basis. When and how did this behavior originate are difficult, if impossible questions to answer, although we may be reasonably assured that this behavior has existed in Guam and elsewhere for as long as human memory serves.

1. In Guam.

A historical context of *fa'ñague* can be argued by looking at the early diaries of explorers and evangelicals, later notes from the archeological record, modern research, and creative expression. Although there seems to be little to no research about *fa'ñague* itself, there is ample writing about Chamorro death traditions that span the ages beginning with Fray Juan Pobre de Zamora, who writes in 1601:

...all the relatives in the village will take dinner and supper to them, which will be prepared from the best food they have in the house. This is continued until the patient dies (Driver, 1984, p.14).

Fray Pobre hints of *fa'ñague* recording that a *macana* (wise Elder) would appear to individuals in the guise of their departed loved ones with messages such as, “Do not go out to fish today or your boat will capsize” (Driver, 1984).

The French naturalist Antoine-Alfred Marche, in the 19th century writes specifically about the importance of the funeral to the Natives, indicating the importance of the state of death:

The family, who had no money for a doctor and for medicines, had a high mass as

well as other *ceremonias*, so that the expenses at the church cost approximately seventy-five francs, and, after the religious ceremony, the family invited friends and acquaintances to a *chinchouli* which cost fifty francs. With half that amount of money, the son's life could have been attended to and saved; but though money is found for any kind of revelry, there is none to pay for a doctor and necessary care (in Atienza & de la Rosa, 2012, p. 19).

Fa'ñague is also reflected in the archeological record. Graves (1986) details an interesting early conflict among archeologists regarding the use of *latte* (limestone monoliths Native to the Marianas islands) dating to 1000 B.C. The earliest field research in Guam conducted by Hornbostel in the 1920s suggests the *latte* served a role in perpetuating the belief of the after-life, indicated by the presence of skeletal remains at *latte* sites. *Latte* feature a capstone (*tasa*) set upon a tall base (*haligi*) which are assembled to look like a chalice. They are traditionally placed in two parallel rows of three or more equidistant sets, which conveniently suggests to later archeologists that they were used as foundations for a house structure, with the space beneath the floors as storage for canoes and tools, perhaps firewood. Yet it is in these subfloor spaces that the human remains have been routinely found (Graves, 1986) — indeed, a reminder of an everyday presence of the dead among the living.

On the most practical level, bones were used as tools. Femurs of skeletons were used as cutting implements and spearheads. A Jesuit priest, Fr. Peter Coomans, noted in 1670:

To make the former, they despoil corpses of their leg bones, and the longer ones are the most desirable ones. For instance, should they want to get their hands on

longer leg bones, they bury the corpses of the dead at a suite, so that the earth would hardly cover the legs from the hips down to the heels, to which they tie small cords, so that, when the ligaments have already putrefied, they pull them [i.e., the leg bones] out and intact from the rest of the body (Tolentino, 2015, in <http://guampedia.com>).

Laura Thompson (1905–2000), a Hawaii-born sociocultural anthropologist who is considered the pre-eminent scholar on historical Chamorro culture writes that even in death, the individual *remains* lucid:

after anointing a corpse with fragrant oil, [they] carry it about to the homes of relatives, in order that the soul may remain in whichever house it chooses...
(Graves, 1986, p. 146).

Graves (1986) expounds on Thompson suggesting:

The dead, then, could be called upon by the descendants for a number of supernatural purposes. By burying an individual beneath a residential structure or by possessing certain key skeletal parts, a household could improve its fortune and community standing (Graves, 1986, p. 146).

Also within the archeological record is evidence of a practice that echoes the idea that the dead remain everyday companions of the living. Tolentino (2015) writes that skulls of the deceased were placed within the homes of relatives as a place setting for *aniti*, the dead's bodiless presence, who could be relied upon by the living to serve functions such as contributors to a family's good fortunes. In this sense, death does not signal "closure" or a "final goodbye" to the Ancient Chamorro, or the modern one.

Today, *fa'ñague* exists in song. J.D. Crutch, a wildly popular local folk musician considered a rebel of tradition, wrote a song before his death in 2001 called *Nanan Māme*, Our Mother. Its lyrics speak of a single mother who under difficult circumstances raised and fed her children who, in her death, can now look upon and be proud of herself. *Nanan māme, gi hilu tanu. Si Yu'os maāse, ni todū y bida-mu. Atan nana ham pagu, ni minaolek na checho-mu.* “Our mother, while on earth, God bless you for all you’ve done. Look at us now mother, at what your good works have become” (Crutch, n.d.).

Another stylistically different song, more American pop-music in style, is by Johnny Sablan. In *Nobia Nene* (1968), he sings about his recently departed lover who whispers to him at night that she will always be with him. Other times he sees her by a tree calling out to him: *Ya ha sangan na ti upman po konne yu.* “And she tells me, that very soon she will take me with her.”

2. Among other Indigenous cultures.

I would not stretch the truth when I say that on the topic of afterlife belief alone, libraries could be filled beyond capacity. Among the present archives are titillating bits of information from other cultures that are appropriate to mention in order to give context to my research, glimpses of ancient worldviews that included a full, sentient afterlife. One of them is Cyprus in the Bronze Age (from the mid-second through the second millennium B.C.). Analysis of burial sites for funerary practices indicate that living individuals ventured to court the “intervention and support of the ancestors in the ongoing fertility and prosperity of the living” (Keswani, 2005; 394). Notably, the Ancient Mediterranean culture known as the Ugarit (6000 B.C.) believed in a “death after death,” which both the living and the dead dreaded above all things. To avoid a second death,

commemorative cults arose to keep the memories of the departed alive. We know this based on artifacts that were excavated in the 1920s, among them, funeral litanies that revealed excruciatingly detailed narratives of familial lineage and life accomplishments meant to be read during funerals (Schmidt, 2000). Still, some cultures buried their dead with other individuals to accompany them in their post life journeys; among them, the Moche of Jequetepeque in Northern Peru. Says Chicoine (2011), these individuals' role "appears to have been to accompany important individuals in the afterlife" (p. 544).

Closer to Guam, scattered among the Micronesian islands, are some funerary practices in islands worth consideration. In Chuuk, an island group along the Caroline Islands which spans Micronesia, the Natives believe that the individual is possessed of two souls, one good (*ngúmiééch*), and the other bad (*ngúmingaw*). Upon death, *ngúmiééch* are able to travel away from the body and return at will. After four days, they are referred to as *sootupw*, and continue to remain included in the affairs of the living. However, the *ngúmingaw* are tied to the corpse. The Natives believe that as the body rots, its stench repels the *ngúmingaw* away from it and into the home where it once lived (Dernbach, 2005).

Also in Micronesia, in Palau, burial caves in its famed Rock Islands speak to how the Native Palauan people viewed the afterlife. Among the human remains in some cave sites are found artifacts of everyday living such as bowls, knives, and scrapers, and decoration. While this may suggest that Palauans choose to separate the dead from the living (interring them on islands rather than on the mainland), Ancient burials also occurred in sand plains which are areas that Palauans traditionally (and still) reserve for

housing and agriculture (Reepmeyer, Clark, Alexander, Okerill, Liston, and Kitalong, 2011).

Further away in Borneo is the practice of the Native Berawan people to hold a “second funeral” in order to guide souls of deceased individuals into a “society of souls in the afterlife.” The attitude of the corpse was informed by the body; therefore, when the corpse achieved dry bone past the state of decomposition, the soul was strong, and able to move into spiritual “society” (Carr, 1995).

Of course, the practice of the living interacting with the dead is echoed among other Indigenous cultures further away, for example, in the southwestern United States. William H. Kelley (1949), while documenting the death practices and beliefs of the southwestern Cocopa tribes, noted that his Native collaborators believed that the dead continued to “live” their normal lives in death.

The Hopi Indians, who now mostly live in Arizona, are said to leave bowls of food for four (4) days upon the graves of their newly deceased, suggesting that the non-living maintain human attributes such as hunger (Hough as cited in Parsons, 1916).

Yet, within this region are Indigenous practices that reject post-life interaction. The Kiowa Apache once did everything they could to suppress acknowledging their dead in an afterlife. As part of their burial practices, they destroyed all of the deceased’s belongings by fire. Those who may have attended to the internment of the body themselves cleansed when they returned to their village by changing or discarding their clothes and applying sage upon their bodies. These people believed that death “brought to life” the evils that were come upon during life and, in death this evil took on inhuman forms (Opler & Bittle, 1961).

Without doubt, there can be many examples from countless other cultures that may be cited here. Suffice it to say that life in death, and the energy that obtains from the afterlife have always been tangible realities in the world. One particular passage that stays with me from my research comes from Robert R. Desjarlais' *Sensory Biographies: Lives and Deaths Among Nepal's Yolmo Buddhists* (2003). In it, he explores the lives of an elderly man and woman who, near their deaths, share with Desjarlais stories about their lives and beliefs. About death, a Nepalese Elder tells him, "Death does not mean dying. It means moving" (pp. 53, 280). In my heart of hearts, I believe that an Ancient Elder of mine would explain *fa'ñague* with this very sentiment.

III. The Knowing: The Senses, Proof and Instinct

The familiar smell of a long-gone relative. A bump in a hallway that is the trademark sound of the deceased. A vision of a dead person either in a dream or awake state. Are these proofs of the continued co-habitation of earthly spaces by non-living persons? Or are they merely imagination and manifestations of despair and desire? How does the Chamorro know that his or her dead are among them? How do others prove the same?

Psychologists use the term "recognition" when a person recognizes a familiar feeling, sound, or sign. There is "*re*-cognition." The experience floods the brain and being with understanding and familiarity. The actual manifestation that elicits recognition is sometimes called representation, meaning that the "actual" is not present in the experience, rather a "sign" substitutes for it. Generally, there two kinds or categories of representations: (1) Mimetic, and (2) spectacular. Mimetic representation describes the presentation of something that is absent via a sign, smell, sound, or some other symbol. A

spectacular representation is “a self-presentation, constitutes an entity and a property by giving the representation legitimate value” (Marin as cited in Leone & Parmentier, 2014).

Mimetic representations are not exclusive, of course, to Indigenous Chamorros.

Homer, in the Iliad wrote many centuries ago:

The form subsists without the body's aid,

Aerial semblance, and an empty shade!

This night my friend, so late in battle lost

Stood at my side, a pensive, plaintive ghost,

Even now familiar, as in life, he came;

Alas! how different! yet how like the same! (Carus, 1902, p. 366).

This recognition is richly echoed in slave accounts in post-Civil War America:

Sho' nuff, the ghost came along while he was a-readin', an' it went all about thro' the house, so 's Mr. Peacock could hear it goin' inter the diffunt rooms an' a-movin' things this-a-way an' that-a-way. But he did n' let on to hear the ghost, — no indeed, — but he kep' a-readin' away ter his Bible. "Arter a while the ghost blowed out his lamp, but he jes' lighted it an' read on, 'n' then he went inter the bedroom an' lay down. That sort o' made the ghost mad, so 's it come inter the bedroom an' he see it (Bergen, 1899, p. 146).

It is easy enough to imagine that spiritual interactions can thrive within groups where the culture is rich with traditional practices, but in Guam, these have mostly fallen away. For example, *latte* is no longer used as a building material. Homes serve no mortuary functions except for the rare *belu*, when the prepared corpse of a deceased individual might be hosted in a home a few days of prayer and visitation before a

cemetery burial. It stands to reason that through traditional practices, traditional spirituality and beliefs are best upheld. Yet Guam has been largely Roman Catholic and under foreign rule since the 1500s. Moreover, the Native language has fallen out of common use. According to the 2010 Census, 147,798 (64%) live off-island compared to the 69,098 who remain¹ (Punzalan, 2015). In Guam, and certainly abroad, the funerary practices associated with the *latte* have long been abandoned. Yet Chamorros, wherever they are, continue to recognize *fa'ñague*.

Why does it continue? Is it tradition, or rather, the remnants of tradition? Is it individual instinct? Is it genetic? Are there really dead people walking among us?

Even skeptics can agree that in death there is wisdom. Consider that generally, most people know far more about a person after he or she dies than when they lived. Simply going through a dead person's belongings reveals information and rationales that help make a more complete picture of the individual while he or she lived. Perhaps, for Chamorros, it is this:

When a superstition is once impressed strongly upon the popular credulity, the fiction always assumes the shape and form which the peculiar imagination of the country is constituted to body forth (Carleton, 1841, p. 2).

Of course, it may be entirely something else.

IV. An Argument for a Mixed Methodology

This research will employ a mixed methodology, although it tends to be misunderstood. Seasoned researchers might come to the quick conclusion it is the most-

¹The same Census reports that 12,902 Chamorros (6%) live in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, namely the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

easy or forgiving theory under which to conduct qualitative research. A little bit of this, a little bit of that. The new Indigenous researcher's mind is tempted with visions of breezily crafting a study using simplistic, haphazard combinations of myth, story, and interview. In this day and age, numbers and statistics without a story are questionable. One only needs to view a pharmaceutical television commercial to realize that even the most devoted empiricists, such as drug companies, employ emotional narrative, images, and inspirational music to prove to consumers that their drugs are well-tested, safe, and necessary for a good life. The voice from above is not enough (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011).

In truth, mixed methodology theory (MM) is a research paradigm with its origins in quantitative research. In the late 1950s, a trend evolved that employed combinations of two or more quantitative methods to answer the same research question, known also as multitrait or multimethod research. (Symonds & Gorard, 2008). Today we understand that MM's goal is to answer problems using stories and statistics that prove them (Creswell, 2013). It derives from various disciplines such as observational field research, constructivism and activity theory, and others, which all use the data collected to "discover theory" (Grey, Williamson, Karp, & Dalphin, 2007). Lincoln et al. (2011) point out that the theory has a high degree of "commensurability" across research paradigms, meaning that the paradigms in your mix can all be "retrofitted" to the benefit of your research, especially in a constructivist model (p.172). In this sense, it is anti-foundational (positivists are foundational). Researchers who employ MM do not cling to a precedent. Rather, through specific methodologies, they allow the combined data to answer the research question.

This is not to say that Native researchers do not analyze under purely empirical frameworks. Many publications by Indigenous researchers who study Native culture have employed strict statistical methods. One such individual is Menominee Native, Megan Bang, who manages research that merges the analysis of Native Menominee nature knowledge with Western science. Together with Douglas L. Medin, she wrote the book, *Who's Asking?* published by the MIT Press in 2014. Certainly, in later pages, I will present data and statistics to relay the information I have collected.

The types of qualitative methods used in MM may be in the form of interviews, observations, documents, photographs, sounds, and email messages — the types of research tools that are appropriate for small groups and the type of methods proposed for the field research of this paper. Qualitative research — detailed voices of people understand their experiences in the settings where they occur — is generally criticized for being highly interpretative, relying heavily on the researcher's opinions. On the other hand, quantitative methods are efficient for large groups, enabling the researcher to explore cause and effect and control for bias. A downside is that it is often criticized as impersonal, dry — one does not hear the word “participants” in quantitative research (Creswell, 2013).

Creswell (2013) further defines MM as having four (4) main components, as follows:

1. Collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data.

Creswell asserts that when a researcher gathers qualitative and quantitative data, two (2) assumptions operate to portray reality. For example, a high scorer in a championship soccer match isn't always the Most Valuable Player of the winning team.

Rather a low scorer who is an ace at blocking invigorates his teammates in way the high scorer cannot. Therefore, he is more valuable to the team. MM works because it does not rely solely on the numbers and weaves a heroic narrative between the numbers painting a more accurate account of the match.

2. Embracing rigorous procedure.

Multiple forms of data collection constitute rigorous procedure. The researcher attends to research design by a thoughtful combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, for example experiment and ethnography. As theory develops, so may the research plan. Sampling should be purposeful, and there should be multiple forms of data collection. Creswell stresses statistical packages when interpreting qualitative methods, and critical attention to permissions and selection of experiment subjects.

3. Integrating two or more forms of data.

This aspect of MM is about design. Conversion design, for example, is the reliance upon collected qualitative data to further collect quantitative data. A comparison of both data sets should yield a merger. Another approach may be explanatory sequential design, which starts with quantitative data gathering succeeded by second, qualitative exploration to follow-up numbers with explanation. The reversal of this procedure is exploratory sequential design where qualitative data is followed by quantitative data.

4. Using the data to frame a broader format.

The basic idea here is to take the results of MM research and expand other research formulas in order to improve them (Creswell, 2013). He suggests that when the research question is answered, that the researcher should look at the larger scope of his/her findings.

The appeal of MM is that it anticipates the gaps that emerge from qualitative-exclusive, or quantitative-exclusive designs. When it works well, it can help eliminate questions that arise when statistics or story alone constitutes a study. In a video interview published January 23, 2015, The Center for Research Quality features the work of Dr. Debra Rose Wilson, a faculty member of the College of Social, Behavioral and Health Sciences at Walden University. She makes an excellent case for using mixed methods in health science, which had traditionally relied on quantitative methods that speak mostly to cause and effect. Cardiovascular health, she argues, can no longer be ethically examined without understanding the subject's personality (i.e., do they have anger issues?), familial support, attitudes toward exercise, and whether they were breastfed (Center for Research Quality, 2015). In 2012, Wilson and her colleague at Tennessee State University authored an article *Long-term Health Outcomes of Childhood Sexual Abuse* (Wilson & Severson, 2012). Their quantitative methods included swabbing for saliva to measure determinant enzymes before and after an intervention of stress-management classes. In addition, they engaged quantitative method (open-ended interviews) that allowed the subject to share reflective self-assessments. Ultimately Wilson and Severson conclude that for declines in systemic function, there is likelihood of emotional and behavioral decline. Indeed, in this research, I rely heavily on the health sciences, particularly nursing, to provide insight into my research.

There is plenty of controversy to be found regarding mixed methodology. Creswell (2008) presents many excellent questions, among them: "What is mixed methods research? How should it be defined? What shifts are being seen in its definition? What drives the interest in mixed methods? How has interest grown in mixed methods?"

What is the role of funding agencies in its development? Does mixed methods provide a better understanding of a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research alone? How can the value of mixed methods research be substantiated through scholarly inquiry?" Nearly six decades on, the theory remains under scrutiny by both quantitative and qualitative devotees.

Another concern is the capability of the single researcher. Critics question whether an individual can be equally skilled in both qualitative and quantitative methods and the attendant analyses. Lincoln and Guba (1985) assert this point in a discussion of validity. Can a single researcher, working alone, have the "interpretative rigor" necessary to craft a valid argument? Grey et al. (2007) couch it in a discussion of confidence. At some point in the research process, the researcher must declare a level of confidence in their statistical data or story collection. Without it, the study suffers. Can confidence be feigned in research? What of a researcher who is naturally averse to definite declarations?

In Chapter 3 of their book, Grey et al. (2007) present us with the idea that research design is not too different from preparing a meal from a recipe book, except that a list of ingredients, cooking time and temperature, and diligent checking for doneness are not quite enough. The cook must develop his/her intuition over time and practice (p. 34). I disagree. For me, mixed methodology would instead constitute the baking section if such a book existed. It is more precise than a simple sauté or grilling, absolutely more rigorous than a curry. A good baker first surveys the fruit in season before committing to the final pastry, taking into account the environmental particulars of altitude and humidity throughout preparation.

This is my understanding of mixed methodology. It is appropriate for this project. Let me reiterate it is only part of my overall research framework, which will continue to reveal itself in my research journey.

A Chamorro Epistemology

I. The Elements of Our Native Knowledge

As I reflect on the readings I have considered in this dissertation, and try to draw upon their conceptual frameworks and other key aspects that can be called “foundations” in order to articulate my own ideas, I am given to explaining my own Native Chamorro epistemology by drawing on Native terms that indicate a key trait of our language: duality of meaning. There are several words in the language that have not only two meanings, but simultaneously hold an opposite meaning. As though the word “white” means white *and* black; or, “high” means a measure of *both* altitude and depth. When Guam was “discovered” by Ferdinand Magellan in the 1521, he named the island “Islas de Ladrones,” the Island of Thieves. Allegedly, the Natives were in the habit of tricking him and his crew into transactions that would overly benefit the Natives. According to Magellan, they stole. I have often wondered whether there was a misunderstanding based on word meaning. Could what the Spanish believed was an archaic Chamorro term for “payment” have carried a second meaning for the Natives that also meant “mutual exchange”? Some may scoff at this proposition, of course, but I would argue that the essence of the language and humor of Chamorro is, in fact, conflicting implication.

Over time, I have discerned and analyzed several words, four (4) of which I feel are the most appropriate to articulate a Chamorro epistemology. While the Chamorro terms that follow have definite utility in basic conversation, they are also profoundly

representative of the Native worldview. Their “definitions” are of a scope that includes Ancient instructions on behavior, morals, and humanistic expectations. They inform our relationships not only with each other, but also with family, society, the world, universe, and divinity. As I write this paper, I am both excited and humbled to be able to express, in some way, some of the deepest thoughts and beliefs of my ancestors, and unspoken rules that guide modern Chamorros today.

1. Element 1: *Mo’na*.

Mo’na is a term that defines the Chamorro concept of time and placement. One way to explain it is to veer into Chamorro spirituality. Let us revisit the closest approximation to “ghost” or “spirit” in the Chamorro language, *Taotao Mo’na*. *Taotao* is the human person, or people. It is sometimes used to refer to a person’s physical stature or being. *Mo’na* can mean either past or future. In this way, there is no distinction in form between persons who are dead or who will be born.

In other words, in the Chamorro epistemology, the past and the future are the same. *Mo’na* indicates the cyclical nature of our beliefs about the realm of existence: where and when people and their souls live, how long ideas and wishes (and curses) last, for whom and to whom knowledge and wisdom are available. Ten o’clock and fifteen minutes after midnight are, again, a time system that in our Native history is indicative of a newer Western fad. To the Native, time is informed not only by *mo’na*, but also by tides, stars, weather, animals, instinct, and the spirit. Speaking of spirituality, the aforementioned *Taotao Mo’na* dictates that in the Chamorro culture, people are people, whether they are breathing or not.

It must also be said that *mo'na* defines physical position. It speaks to both being ahead, and being behind. In this way, it informs the concept of Native Chamorro equality. Everyone, everything, and every idea has its place in the future and in the past. When we speak of the concept of “today,” we include “yesterday” and “tomorrow.” This is what *mo'na* provides the Chamorro worldview.

2. Element 2: *Nene*.

Nene defines things, individuals, or animals, which deserve and require our care and love. We use this term interchangeably to describe both infants and the elderly, or any other person or animal of any age that require our utmost attention. In the same manner the Native Chamorro changes his or her life to accommodate the needs of a newborn infant, we freely abandon career or interrupt home life and education to care for our elderly and sick. It makes no difference to us that the individual is either entering life or leaving it; it is our duty to attend to our *nene*.

In modern usage, *nene* is used when referring to love and affection between two individuals. One can witness its use even among non-speaking Natives, who call others *nene* as a term of affection, in the same way “honey” is used in contemporary dialect. It is co-opted by young individuals the same way “baby” might be used in urban speak, and by open-minded people who use it as a term of endearment and acknowledgment to others. In this usage, *nene* takes on many layers. It indicates, “lover,” “baby,” “loved one,” and “spirit.”

3. Element 3: *Adahi*.

Within the Chamorro lexicon that includes language, behavior, the earthly and divine, *adahi* stands out as our linguistic approximation that other cultures recognize

either specifically or as a conglomeration of respect, responsibility, care, stewardship, and protection. Though *adahi* might be translated into any one of these words, it is, at once, neither of them. And so, as a Native Chamorro and Chamorro language speaker, it is difficult for me to agree with any casual translation of *adahi*, because any other word or combination of them is met with conflict and disagreement by my Native senses.

For example, when a Chamorro uses the word “respect” or its Native adaptation, *respetu*, in lieu of *adahi*, in order to describe ways of behaving with environmental spaces, the Native soul becomes infuriated at the shortsightedness of the speaker and his or her translation. To the Native mind, respect/*respetu* is a foreign word; it does not belong to us. It is a fad expression nearing insult, one that cannot begin to encapsulate how we feel (or ought to) about our Native environments. To the Native mind, respect/*respetu* is merely a noun or adjective, and barely a verb. To the Chamorro, it is a code of behavior, a contract that defines the responsibility and love we must carry in our minds and soul toward not only the environment, but to each other, and our ideals about the universe and spirituality.

Our truth is not to use trite words to define our responsibilities. *Adahi* suggests that we are to watch out for the reefs, the mountaintops, and every space and everything and being between them. It calls us to remember that we are to be the sentinels for our place and our people. *Adahi* is to remain at the forefront of our minds and hearts; in fact, we greet others using a form of it. *Hafa Adai*, our greeting, is derived from *adahi*. We also use the word as part of our farewell, *Adahi y chalan*, “Watch the road.” *Adahi y famaguon*, “Watch the children.” *Adahi y korason ’mu yan y trastes ’mu*. “Watch your heart and your things.” *Adahi hao*. “Watch yourself.” Though Chamorros today use

“Adios” as the standard farewell, it is not part of the Native tongue, and therefore, it lacks instruction. It is obviously, and merely, a term that originates from the Spanish conquest of the 16th century. A recent fad when one considers the thousands of years of the Chamorro experience.

4. Element 4: *Gaige*.

The root of *gaige*, *gai*, is a verb that indicates existence. If you like, it is the Chamorro approximation of “is.” It differs from the more common *gaige*, in that it is in fact, not common: instead, it is sacred. *Gai* is used to indicate or analyze the divine. Specifically, when Chamorros say that an individual has supernatural powers, he or she is *gai taotao*, meaning “a[nother] person is there.” Otherwise, *gaige* is the more common form of the word. *Gaige si Juan gi tienda*, “John is at the store,” or *Man-gaige siha gi sanlâgu*, “They are in the States.”

It is important to note that as the Native Chamorro uses “is” to refer to objects that become less and less divine or sacred, *gaige* becomes another word entirely, which is *guaha*. *Guaha fina-mames gi hilo lamasa*, “There are sweet pastries on the table,” or *Kao guaha television gi gima’mu?*, “Is there TV at your house?” As objects or ideas become more “secular” or disposable, the form of *gai* changes.

II. Schematic Considerations

When Indigenous scholars offer a graphic representation of their theories, they often take a macro approach. Kawagley, in his analysis of a Yupiaq worldview, uses a tetrahedral, the reference points being the immense concepts of the “natural realm,” the “spiritual realm,” the “human realm,” the “universe,” and the “circle of life” (Figure 3). The ecological model of Hawaiian wellbeing, expressed by McGregor, Morelli,

Matsuoka, Rodenhurst, Kong, and Spenser, (2003), is outlined by the monumental ideas of “nation wellbeing,” “community wellbeing,” and “individual wellbeing” (Figure 4).

Sean Wilson, the Canadian Cree scholar, goes further to suggest that Indigenous research, itself, is “ceremony,” which is by all measures, a boundless concept (Wilson, 2008).

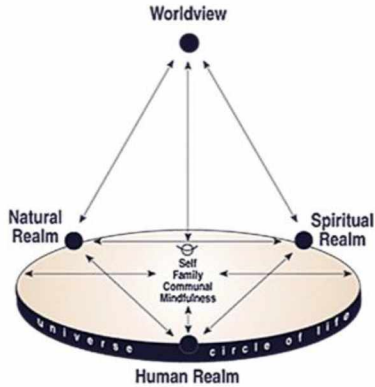


Figure 3. Kawagley's Tetrahedral



Figure 4. McGregor, et al., Ho'oulu Lahui Aloha

III. A Fractal Model of Culture

In my life, I have grown to understand and believe that Indigenous wisdom can be expressed as a “fractal process,” as defined by the mathematician Benoit B. Mandelbrot.

He writes:

Broadly speaking, mathematical and natural fractals are shapes whose roughness and fragmentation neither tend to vanish, nor fluctuate up and down, but remain essentially unchanged as one zooms in continually and examination is refined.

Hence, the structure of every piece holds the key to the whole structure

(Mandelbrot, 1989, p. 4).

By “fractal process” I mean that culture can be defined in increasingly smaller scale, that it grows outward (and inward) with statistical reliability. When the Māori say, for example, that life itself is represented in a tree or its leaf, that it really does represent all the processes of life within the universe (Pahima, 1997). All the chemicals in the universe exist in the leaf, as they do on the earth, in the forest, in the acre, in the copse, and within the tree on which the leaf is present. Those same elements exist in individuals, their families, their clan, culture, nation, and population — infused into their nerves, hands, brain, ideas, behaviors, beliefs, lives, and spirituality.

I must also admit that part of the allure of fractal theory is that it purports to find order in chaos (Mandelbrot, 1989). When I consider the work of Indigenous scholars, I find that they, too, are seeking the same resolution: of how to move the concepts of Aboriginal thought, behavior, and philosophy to a place of understanding and validity.



Figure 5. Mandelbrot and B. Norton. Computer graphic on photographic paper. 1983.

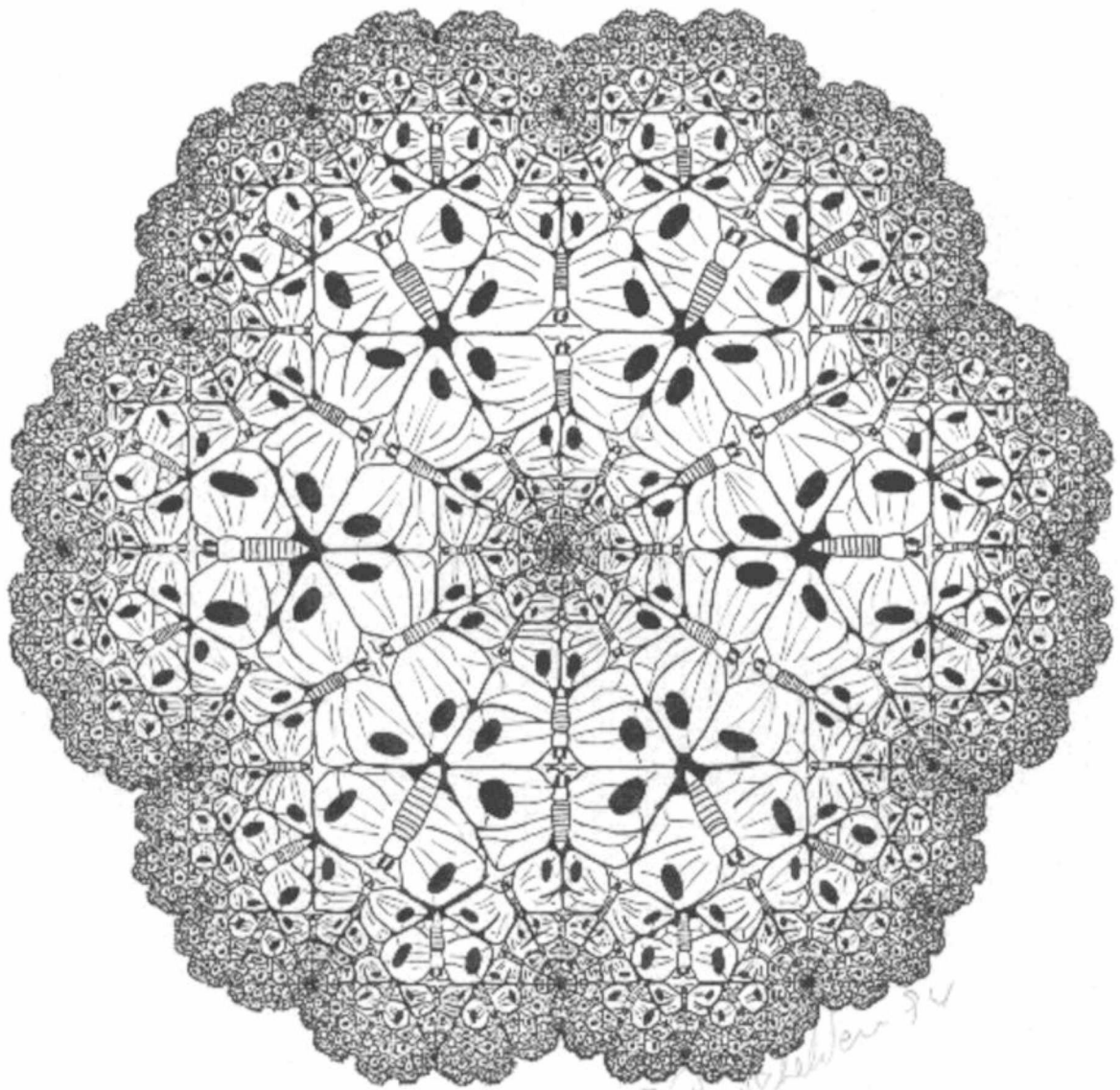


Figure 6. An Escheresque Fractal by Peter Raedschelders

IV. Holographic Inspiration

In a previous section, I offer a simplified overview why the use of a holographic model is appropriate for cultural analysis. I will expand here. Within the Indigenous scholarly collective is a theory that suggests holography is an appropriate application with which to analyze culture. Science tells us that a holographic file provides a complete

picture of the image even if it is damaged (although from a different perspective). I also maintain that mathematics can do the same thing. Why not? If we can discern laws that lead us to calculating unknown quantities from scant measures such as an angle, or a side, certainly, Indigenous scholarship can take the same position. In fact, it is not so much that we can, we *should*. *We must*.

I arrived at my assumptions partly by analyzing Purnell's holographic model of cultural competence, which I encountered while surveying scholarly works on death rituals (Figure 7). Though his schematic is crafted outside a strictly epistemological regimen (it is, in fact, a look at culture through a lens of health care), its elements are specific: "death ritual," "health care," "nutrition," to name a few (Purnell, 2002). These are not nearly as vast as the aforementioned elements of the Indigenous viewpoints, and are much closer to the way I feel I would explain the structure of Chamorro wisdom.

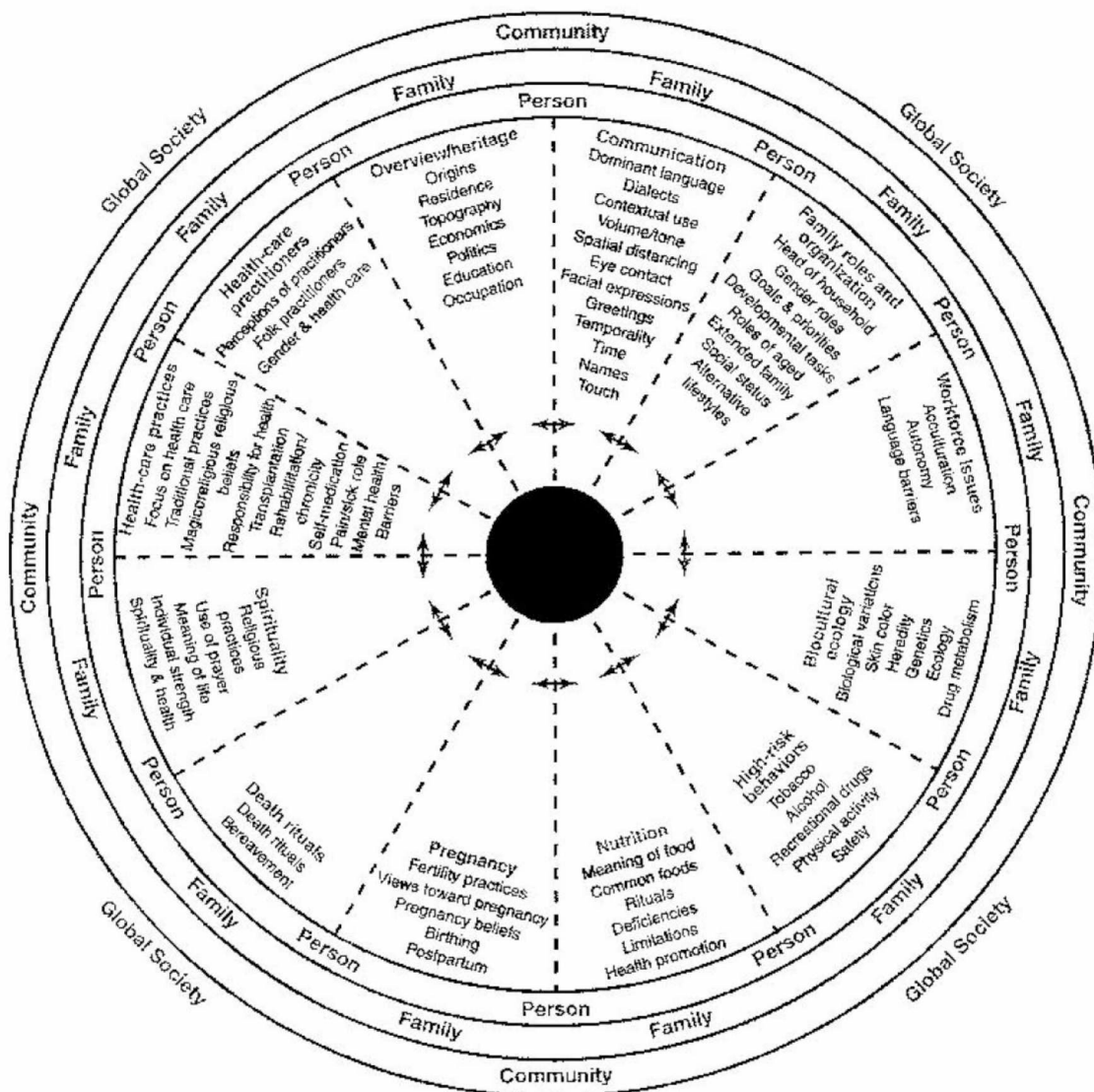


Figure 7. Purnell's Model of Cultural Competency

V. Arriving at An Atomic Schema

And so, I choose a schema of the Chamorro way of knowing borrowing from mathematics and science, specifically, a 20th-century atomic model attributed to physicists Hantaro Nagaoka, Ernest Rutherford, and Niels Bohr.

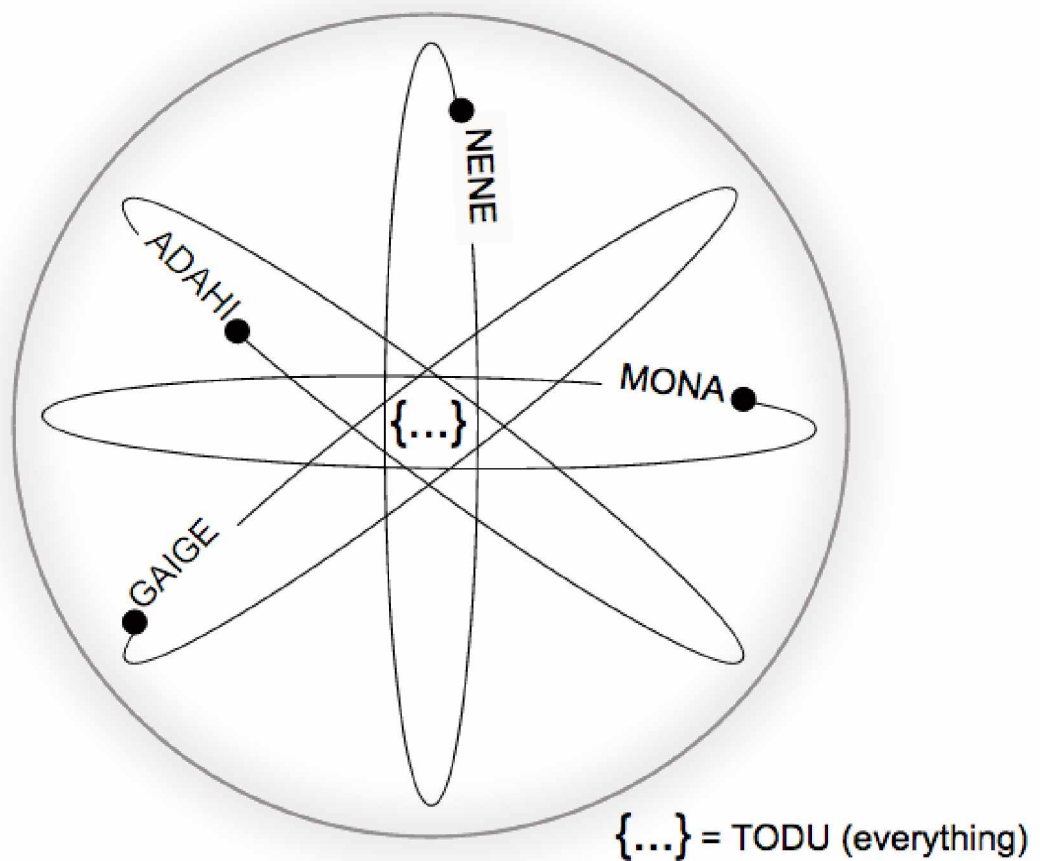


Figure 8. Ho's Atomic Model for Chamorro Ways of Knowing

This atomic model succeeds in telling many stories, my own here, and those to whom its form is attributed. Many argue that it originates with Hantaro Nagaoka's

Saturnian model of atoms. He predicted that at the center of a complex of circles of energy (primarily electrons), would exist a great mass, which accounts for the majority of the atom's weight (Bailey, 2008). Later, Ernest Rutherford would call that mass a "nucleus," and with other physicists, analyzed several elements realizing that they possessed a special number, its atomic number. This number, they discovered, corresponds to the pattern of lines emanating from the element when it is bombarded by cathode rays (Bailey, 2008). Niels Bohr's contribution to the model was the idea that electrons traveled in orbit around the nucleus, much like the planets rotate around the sun in our solar system (Bailey, 2008). Together, these men (along with an untold number of researchers and lesser-known greats) forged the interplanetary model of the atom that we know today, and that I am using now.

By co-opting this classic model, I am suggesting that the Chamorro worldview is based on particles/foundations/ideas that are bound together to both create and energize the Chamorro way of knowing into every element of life. And, that these "atoms" together create the Chamorro worldview. In this way, *Nene*, *Mo'na*, *Adahi*, and *Gaige* are the particles that define Chamorro epistemology. In science, we understand that specific particles in specific quantities define an element and its atoms. Even though the same particles are present in another atom, if they occur in a varying distribution, the composition is an entirely different element. Consider that life-giving carbon dioxide (CO₂) differs from deadly carbon monoxide (CO) by a mere atom of hydrogen. So, too, is the Chamorro element. If it lacks *mo'na* — if there is no authentic sense of time and access — then there is no Chamorro worldview. If there is no *gaige*, then there is no presence for ideas, people and spirit. If there is no *adahi*, then there is no sense of

responsibility or stewardship for tradition or earth. If there is no *nene*, then there is no point to love, care, or concern. Together these “foundational particles” orbit a nucleus that is the Chamorro way of knowing. They energize it into existence, and allow it to permeate the realms that define humanity, the environment, the spirit world, and the universe.

This is a departure from the noted schematics I have mentioned here. In those schematics, the everyday, mundane (if you will, practical) ideas are not present. Rather they are sweeping representations of immense ideas. I am proposing a model of Chamorro epistemology that starts with the unit of life that, together with other units of life, constitutes the whole.

In my model, the nucleus { ... } is the set of all things that exist, seen or unseen, real or imagined, present or past. This can be described by the Native term *todu*. I propose that to understand the Chamorro worldview, one can impose any idea into the atomic schema to glean the Chamorro way of thinking about the specific idea, and the universe.

For example:

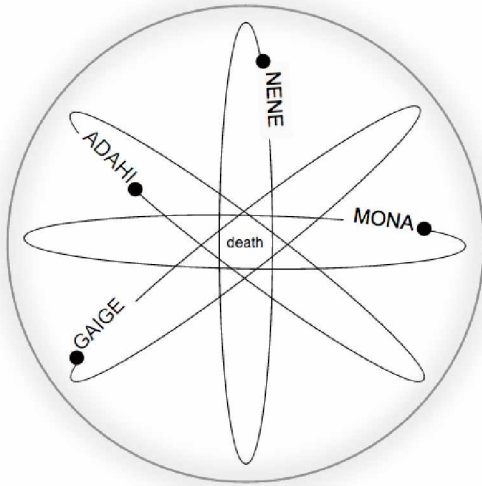


Figure 9. Ho's Schema, Death

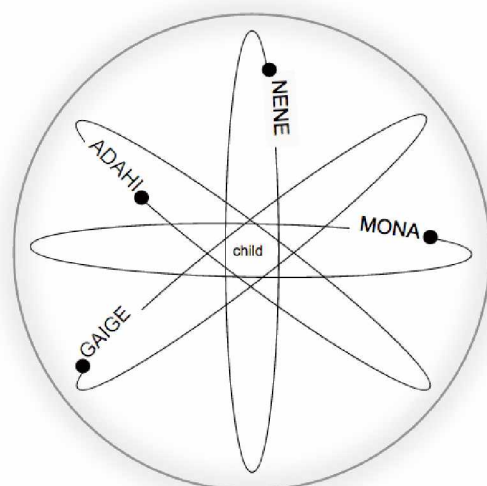


Figure 10. Ho's Schema, Child

Here I have imposed two ideas into my model, “death” and “child.” To the Chamorro mind, one looks at death, the same way one looks upon a child. We have the same responsibilities (*adahi*) and sense of caring (*nene*) to the departed as we do to the infant. They are present (*gaige*) in our hearts and conscience both now and forever (*mo'na*). This is why *fa'ñague* exists among our people. It is why we attribute our deceased the same level of presence in our lives as those who live. It is why we look upon the deceased as people, not non-human or supernatural beings. It is why they are not strictly people from the past; they are people who are among us now, and will be among us in the future.

This is also true for the ocean and one's health, prayer and animals:

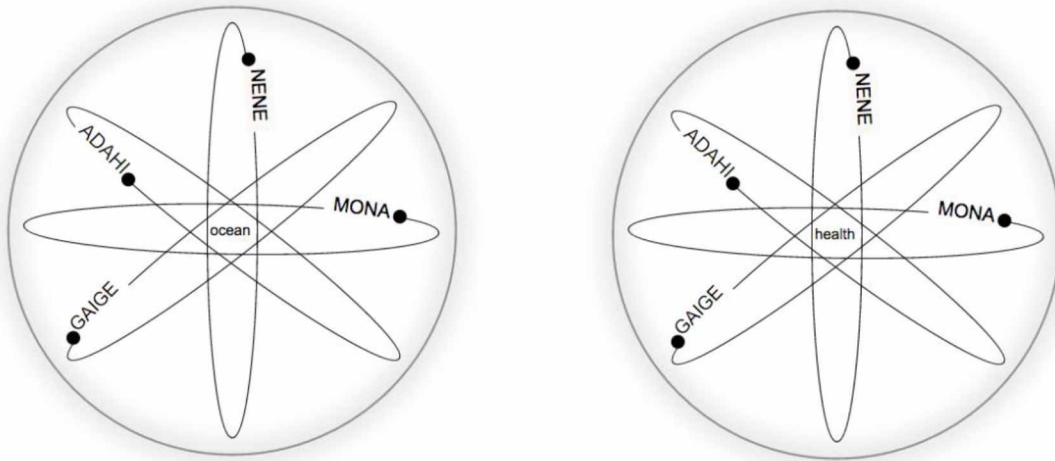


Figure 11. A pair of Ho's Atomic Schema for Ocean and Health

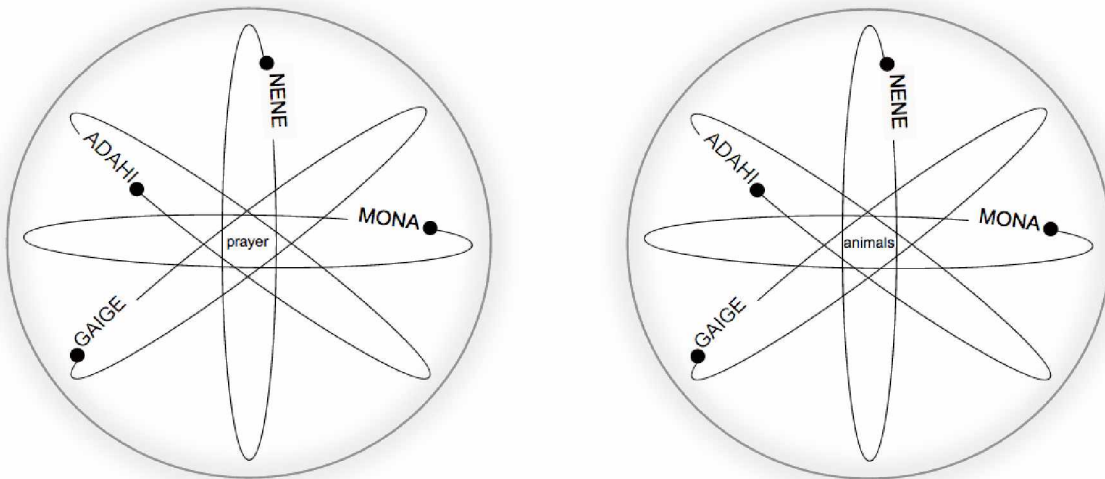


Figure 12. A pair of Ho's Atomic Schema for Prayer and Animals

And on it goes. Ultimately, the Chamorro universe is composed of these atoms, which in its immensity, remains composed of these very four foundations.

VI. Hindsight: Chamorro Epistemology in Action

I often get asked what it is like having been raised on a distant island within an obscure culture, immigrating to the United States and becoming an American. In my

younger years, I would say that there really were no great differences. Guam, after all, is an American territory; therefore, physically moving to the mainland was not as jarring as some might perceive. As I grew older, I became aware of my deep cross-cultural conflicts, which manifested themselves in mostly awkward ways. In retrospect, long before I even thought of writing about a Chamorro worldview, I was struggling with living with it in Western society.

Nineteen years ago, my life started to turn into what became a journey of the recognition of what I have always known. I wrote about it in my first book, which was about a subject that has nothing to do with Indigenous knowledge.

Then I suffered a seizure on February 12, 1998, smack in the middle of dinner service in the restaurant. I went unconscious for several minutes and had an out-of-body experience. From somewhere above, I looked down at the world, my town, my block, and the restaurant. I was looking for the source of an unbearable bloodcurdling scream that was interrupting my otherwise pleasant trip to the other side. Eventually, I noticed that the screaming was coming from a stranger lying on the dining room floor. At first I didn't recognize him, so I descended closer and realized in an instant that it was me. I woke up.

It was one of those incidents that was both inexplicable and psychologically inconsequential, but it traumatized me enough that I spent a few months assessing my life. I realized that despite my so-called success, I'd actually become an outsider again, this time in my own home (Ho, 2004, p.13).

Part of the *assessment* I wrote of articulated itself as a feverish effort to spread a message I felt had long been buried — that I, we, were approaching “a whole life” in the wrong way.

In 2005, I signed a contract with Time Warner to release a second book, simultaneously entering into a cable television deal with Discovery Networks for what became “The Dan Ho Show.” Essentially, the Time-Warner publication was my first book, re-tooled and “picture-ized” to fit the mass market. In it I explain *gaige*, using *gai* as a descriptor for my ideas of achieve balance:

As you probably already know, the English language lacks many cut-and-dried equivalents for certain foreign words, for example, *taboo*. Up until this Polynesian term fell upon the ears of westerners, English speakers lacked a word to describe inhibition or aversion to specific behaviors or objects. *Gai* is similar to *taboo* in this way — it does not have an easily identified English counterpart. In its most elementary form, *gai* can mean the same as *have*, except that it is used exclusively to indicate qualitative traits such as respect or honor. More accurately, it assists in articulating the supernatural or spiritual nature of an individual, time, or place. In this sense, it departs from the relatively democratic persuasions of the verb *to have*; rather, it actualizes a singular expression of the individual’s condition in the universe. You might call it a sacred verb.

The closest translation of *gai* — “is there now” — is what prompted my adaptation of it to describe my philosophy. The implication in “The lights are on, but no one’s home,” is not dissimilar to the metaphor of *gai*. As a lifestyle

philosophy, *gai* challenges us to “check in” with ourselves before we start to decorate, cook, garden, dress, or entertain (Ho, 2006, p. 22).

Whether I liked it or not, my Chamorro worldview would not be quieted; in fact, it had changed my life in ways I never expected. I came to this country blinded by the beguiling accouterment of the West, a condition that every atom in my Native body rebelled against until it finally took me down. Indeed, there is something to be said about the Yup’ik notion of the powerful mind (John, 2010). Thoughts are real things. Thoughts are born of an ancestral idea. Thoughts are as modern as they are ancient, as personal as they are universal. Thoughts are form-shifters. Thoughts are powerful.

VII. On Simpatico

One of the things I admire about writers of Indigenous epistemologies is that they are able to craft keen yet soulful expressions of their personal and Native worldviews. Having ventured into the same enterprise, I know that it is extremely difficult. Where does one begin? How can I possibly express in English, things with no or little English equivalents? What have others from my part of the world done?

As I have written earlier, there is little to no writing on Chamorro epistemology that is known. Therefore, I had cast a net deeper into Micronesia where still none existed. Then I threw the net wider into Polynesia, consulting, among others, the Hawaiian scholar Manulani Myer’s *Ho‘oulu: Our Time of Becoming* (2003). By most measures, this work ought to have been a guiding framework for me, a “fellow” Pacific Native. Alas, it was not. I am Micronesian; Ms. Myer is Polynesian. She tells her stories one way, I, my own way. Our uses of the English language are vastly differentiated by word choice and cadence. We are as different as two people can be. Perhaps we are only similar in

that our islands do not have snow, although Hawai'i is much more temperate than Guam and Micronesia. For me, daring to express a personal view on my Native epistemology has been, and will continue to be, a journey I must take on my own — for now.

I find that my Native language has always offered me a way to express and share a Chamorro view that informs both my personal ideas and one that I can be confident is representative of the larger Chamorro cosmology. Of course, I may be wrong, but I am satisfied with how it has proved itself over my own lifetime. It has become clear to me that this tension — personal versus universal — is the reality of the Indigenous scholar, and the challenge of unification among Indigenous peoples. It is an endless negotiation of doubt, truth, emotion and divinity. I hope that my own work will encourage future Chamorro scholars to express our beliefs through their own voices, and using other foundational ideas different from my own.

The Research Process

I. Research Issues

1. Methodology.

In the abstract of this dissertation, I write that I hoped this research would begin an argument for a new research theory useful for current and future generations of Native scholars. By now, it should be quite apparent that I have engaged many models over several academic disciplines to tell a story of *fa'ñague* and the larger Chamorro epistemology. This is a vast departure from what Linda Smith proposed in her seminal declaration that the Native scholar must de-colonize his or her research mind (and tool-kit) in order to serve Indigenous content with utmost integrity (Smith, 1999). Yet, here I am doing what most may surely say is the complete opposite. In truth, I probably went the other way.

My foremost scholarly challenge was to define a research methodology that served the purposes of my project. Put another way, the major cloud over this project was the need to simultaneously create methodology while conducting it. Certainly, Grounded Theory, Cultural Theory, Dual-Inheritance Theory, and Phenomenology are in my tool-kit, but the sum of them could not suffice. There were other ideas that needed support which, for better or worse, came from several other disciplines. The goal always remained to deliver an honest and scholarly analysis of *fa'ñague*. I am calling this method, this way, *Neo-Indigenous Methodology*. This dissertation is a working example of it. I plan to expand the idea in another book after this work is completed.

2. Research participation.

A. In the field.

Early in the research design process, it became clear to me that two groups of subjects would best tell the *fa'ñague* story: (1) Chamorros living in Guam, and (2) Chamorros living off-island. To collect data, I would observe and interview in the field, and offer an online survey to Chamorros in the diaspora.

The management of the fieldwork was a relatively glitch-free process. It basically required that I arrange for interviews either by myself or a through a local research assistant. After about three months of planning, the fieldwork took place during the first week of April, 2017. In total, 12 in-person interviews were conducted, and I observed conversations among 48 Chamorro Elders, *y man'amko*, on eight separate occasions.

My purpose for setting up these interviews on the island was to determine whether the *fa'ñague* experiences of island-dwellers differed from islanders who lived off-island. My initial instinct was to conduct the interviews in Chamorro, believing that Native terms could help clarify a truer version of the beliefs and experiences than can be made by English.

I employed a local, well-respected individual as a field assistant to vet research participants, because Chamorros are most willing to participate in research with people they know well. As a stranger to all of them, I would need the assistant not only to set up the interviews, but to also be present when they were conducted. This person was Fr. Eric Forbes, the much-loved rector of the San Fidelis Capuchin Friary in the village of Agana Heights.

I asked Fr. Forbes to engage as many Elders and individuals whom he knew were reasonably conversant in Chamorro, and who had experienced *fa'ñague* one or more times in their lives on Guam. I prepared questions (Appendix D, page 176) that would yield information about how the respondents understood *fa'ñague*, from whom they learned about it, and what beliefs about their experiences affected their worldview.

The interviews were conducted at the Friary. I recorded all of them on a digital recorder. I alone transcribed them. Some of these transcripts are provided on page 178 as Appendix E. The transcripts I did not include were not easily decontextualized to preserve anonymity.

I observed the conversations among the Elders at five senior citizen centers located in Santa Rita, Agana Heights, Dededo, Agat, and Humatak. These observations were made in the spirit of *komplimentu*, meaning I bore mindfulness of the Elders' status by keeping quiet and not taking notes, which they would have considered disrespectful. I visited the Agana Heights center three times. I did not record these conversations for two reasons: (1) Many of Elders did not wish to be recorded, and (2) I wanted to be as un-intrusive as possible to allow for the conversations to be as candid as possible.

B. Online.

The technical aspects of launching a web-based survey to Chamorro audiences was straightforward. After testing three well-known programs, I chose SoGo Surveys. This software allowed the most flexibility in designing and embedding the survey in various test scenarios. In addition, its reporting features offered graphics which I felt were appropriate for this study.

Next, I designed a website to host the survey and provide research disclosures required by the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Internal Review Board (IRB). A key aspect was to secure a name that would easily engage the target participants. Rather than using *fa'ñague* in the web address, I chose www.ChamorroCulture.com. It was catchy, more easily remembered than *fa'ñague*, and it could serve research purposes beyond this project for future online data collection.

The technical portion of the online research was quite linear and instantly gratifying. However, engaging respondents proved to be quite a challenge. It was extremely difficult to encourage off-island Chamorros to take the survey.

Initially, it made the most sense to conduct a mixed outreach strategy on social media. I established a Facebook page for www.ChamorroCulture.com, and purchased advertising for the survey among Chamorro audiences through Facebook advertising. I received only a handful of views, and even less likes and shares.

Thereafter, I decided to take a grassroots approach. I telephoned and emailed 12 Chamorro culture groups in California and Washington State in order to explain the project.² Through these efforts, I was able to secure mentions of the survey in two monthly newsletters. Still, I was only able to get a handful more completed surveys.

Frustrated, I created emails directed to approximately 10,000 Chamorro individuals in an email marketing package offered by a local marketing group. While only a few more were engaged, I was able to collect what I believed was a reasonable amount of data from 62 completed surveys.

² The majority of the Chamorro populations in the United States live in California and Washington.

In total, the online data used in this dissertation is taken from 62 responses compiled from January 31, 2017, through September 30, 2017. Following are the demographic specifics.

a. Participants' ages.

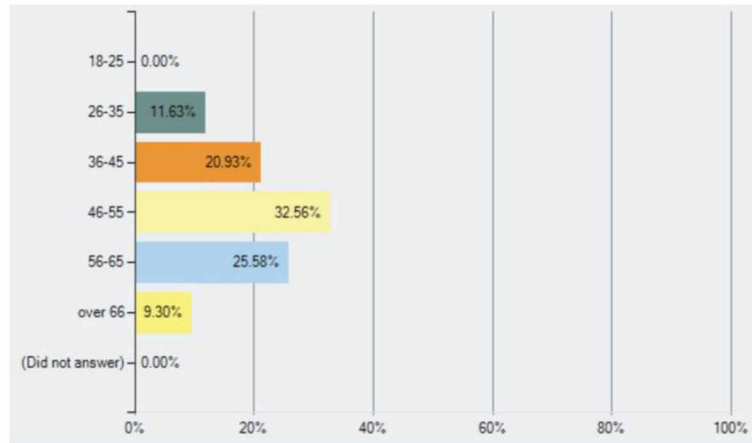


Figure 13. Responses: How old are you?

The age of the participants ranged from 26 to over 66 years.

b. Ethnicity of participants.

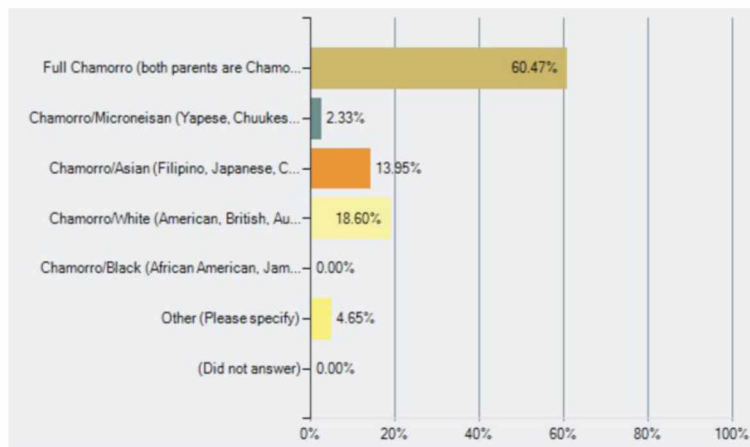


Figure 14. Responses: How “Chamorro” are you?

All of the participants claimed Chamorro ethnicity, with over half of them claiming that both parents were of Chamorro heritage.

c. Locations of participants.

Arizona	2.33%
Armed Forces Europe	2.33%
Armed Forces Pacific	2.33%
California	39.53%
Colorado	2.33%
District of Columbia	2.33%
Hawai'i	4.65%
Illinois	2.33%
Kentucky	2.33%
Louisiana	2.33%
Massachusetts	2.33%
Michigan	2.33%
Minnesota	2.33%
North Carolina	2.33%
Oregon	2.33%
Texas	6.99%
Utah	2.33%
Virginia	6.99%
Washington	6.99%
Wisconsin	2.33%

Figure 15. Responses: What state do you live in?

The majority of the participants lived in California, but Chamorros living in 19 more states completed the survey.

The survey questions are listed on Appendix C page 165. I purposefully used a tone that was more clinical than the language I used in the field. This was because I wanted my online respondents to be as objective as possible and not be swayed by the fact that I was a fellow Chamorro. I felt that this would ensure that the stories gathered

online were as straightforward as possible without emotional embellishment. In my mind, if the two data sets told the same story, then my theories about *fa'ñague* were sound.

3. Chamorro language engagement in the field.

I hoped to record field data in the spoken Chamorro language, but there were several reasons this did not entirely happen. First, most Elders who speak the language are not willing to go on record in an interview. I could really only observe discussions and engage when I could.

Secondly, among the individuals who do speak the language, half of the interview was inevitably conducted in English, mostly because English is used to add emphasis. Sadly, Chamorros, like myself, born to an Americanized Guam have learned to defer to English when we wish to be absolutely clear about things.

Finally, yet mercifully, I learned during this research that *fa'ñague*, itself, has influenced how Chamorros perceive life and relationships to such a degree that the telling and documenting of the *fa'ñague* experience is maintained by exclusively Chamorro terms. Even in interviews at which only English was spoken, certain Chamorro terms were used that could only be used when discussing *fa'ñague*. In the end, the Native language that held the clearest wisdom about this aspect of our cosmology insinuated itself into the conversations. *Nene*, *mona*, *adahi*, and *gai* are certainly among these terms. There are others, among them *kanai*. In everyday parlance, *kanai*, is the term for “hand.” However, when one finds inexplicable finger-like bruises on his or her body, *kanai* is used to describe a *Taotao Mo'na*'s hand print.

Another term is *chetnot maipe*. *Chenot* is the Native term for “sickness,” and *maipe* is the term for “hot” or “warm.” These terms are used separately every day to refer

to one's health or the weather; however, they are used together only to describe a sickness that cannot be medically be diagnosed, and that is attributed to the spirits.

There are other terms that are scattered in the research findings to follow.

Findings

I. Formatting the Data, Findings, Conclusions and Discussion: A Roadmap

A creative priority in writing this dissertation was to allow it to read, as much as possible, like a story. The narrative features in it are as important to me as the research method and data analysis. Because of this, this findings section may not read much like others you may have read, or how they traditionally read.

In most dissertations, flow of information roughly proceeds in this way:

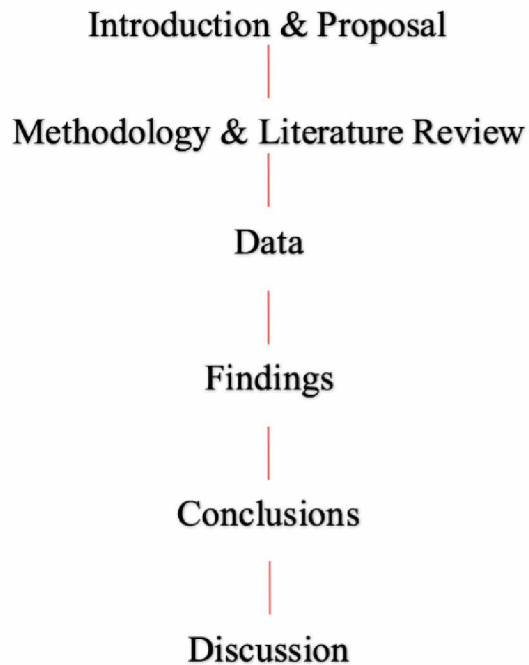


Figure 16. Traditional Research Format

For the record, I think this format works beautifully for many research goals, particularly those that are more quantitative than qualitative, or in a social-scientific sense, more Western-oriented than Indigenous. This model holds many assumptions, the main one being that the topic being studied is fairly undisputed by Western readers. However, the study of Indigenous culture requires a different flow — indeed, different information. I propose to call this this a Neo-Indigenous Research Format.



Figure 17. Neo-Indigenous Research Format

In the following pages, I will combine three items (the data, findings, and summary) into a single section that support a single conclusion. In this way, the narrative of each research revelation is treated as its own “chapter,” rather than apportioned over

three or more sections. From a storyteller's perspective, it allows for the tale to be painted one episode at a time, which I believe serves the Indigenous story the best.

Rather unscientifically, I propose an epilogue to conclude the research. It is a necessary deep breath for both the researcher and the reader. It is not technically easy to combine three elements into one section in a cohesive way, but I think I have achieved it. To me, the epilogue allows for the author to wrap up an arduous journey in the way an Elder might — with an allegory, or a statement of hope. Indeed, it is my wish that this dissertation thus far, and the findings in the following pages forge a useful model for other Indigenous scholars.

Finding I. *Fa'ñague* is a Defining Feature of Chamorro Cosmology

In my research and throughout my academic life, I find that Indigenous cultures explain their universal place in life and death with such ease and conviction that it causes empirical sorts to become disjointed for lack of “hard” scientific data. This seems true not just for people who embrace science, but even among those who fight for the rights of Indigenous cultures and honestly recognize the wisdom held by them. One only needs to glance at the long, agonized history of the United Nation's Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) to quickly realize this. It took nearly a quarter of a century for extremely compassionate individuals to agree to this non-legally binding document; mind you, there was no policy being written during these long years. It was merely a benign document that stated individual Native traditions hold truths deserving of protection, and that Indigenous views on their lives and legacies are important. If you can believe it, the leaders of the free-thinking world, the United States and Canada, were its last signatories in 2010 and 2016 respectively.

Therefore, it must be my first research revelation that *fa'ñague* does, in fact, have a definable form and function in Chamorro life, past, present and future. It is a unit of inheritance with a clear purpose, a catalyst for tradition and language of the Chamorro culture, and a means to glean useful moral direction for the individual and society.

1. The forms and personifications of *fa'ñague*.

Based on common Chamorro myth, and corroborated by my research, I have concluded that *fa'ñague* can be personified by the following forms.

A. *Difuntu*.

When an individual has recently died, he or she is referred to as *difuntu/difunta*, or *y difuntu/y difunta*.³ This term describes both the state of death, as well as the personification of the *fa'ñague* “visitor.” These visitations vary: they may be dreams, apparitions of faces, bodies or body parts, noises, smells, familiar movements, or another visceral signal that may be attributed to the *difuntu*. The individual visited may have known the *difuntu* in life, or through memento and/or recollection of a family member.

B. *Taotao Mo'na*.

This *fa'ñague* personification is of an individual from the distant past, to as far back as Ancient times. Another way to describe it is a *difuntu* who is no longer familiar. Rather, they are anonymous to the person being visited, although they be known to other *Taotao Mo'na*. This familiarity among *Taotao Mo'na* is a phenomenon that is typically relayed to the person being visited by the spirit. An individual may also be informed by

³ *Difuntu* is masculine, *difunta* is feminine. *Y* is the article “the.”

another living person of *Taotao Mo'na* to *Taotao Mo'na* associations which can either be friendly or adversarial.

Additionally, the *Taotao Mo'na* is a shape-shifter; he or she may appear in the form of an animal or light, and may make their presence known through very human sounds such as footsteps, screaming, or crying. Often, they are seen as very tall humans with unidentifiable faces.

C. Duendes.

Although there is some disagreement among Chamorros whether these human-formed spirits are juvenile or adults of diminutive stature, it is generally agreed that *duendes* are small, childlike, child-sized personifications that bring mischief and chaos. They are dangerous.

D. Man Baba.

More of a category that I am designating than a specific personification, *man baba* is a group of non-human entities that bring fear and danger.⁴ They do not have a specific unifying form; however, there are classic examples in Chamorro folklore in Guam.⁵ Among these are the *Babuen Kuaresma*, the Lenten Boar, which is said to rear its horrific toothed head from deep in the jungle during the Roman Catholic period of Lent. A flying birdlike creature known as *utak* is a being of flight that can signal either a good or bad message. Similarly, a cat, *katu*, has been known to represent an evil entity.

Furthermore, there are areas known to be inhabited by *man baba* such as certain rocks, bubbling springs, or shorelines which can host or cause bad things to happen.

⁴ There is no formal category called *man baba* in the Chamorro language.

⁵ Other islands in the Marianas may have their own forms.

It must also be said that apparitions of and by Roman Catholic spirits, such as Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, are not uncommon when Chamorros speak of spiritual apparitions. These, however, are not a part of this research.

2. The cultural functions of *fa'ñague*.

A. *Fa'ñague* is a language modifier.

It appears that *fa'ñague* is an experience that cannot be summoned by a living individual; rather, it is something initiated by a force not available to those who are living. In Chapter 4, I stated that Chamorros have reserved a modifier, *gai*, exclusively for describing sacred experiences. I would now like to introduce another such sacred modifier, the term *ma*, or *man*, which may be used to signal *fa'ñague*.

Ma, like *gai*, elevates an event from the ordinary to the extraordinary.

Consider the Native term for “to take,” *konne*. Fishermen may take fish from the reefs, and the term will be manipulated any number of ways: *Ha-konne si Juan y mañahak*, [Juan caught the baby rabbit fish.] or *Konne, fan, esti y rosketti?* [Please take these polverones pastries with you.] However, when the visitation by a deceased mother is experienced by a living daughter, *ma'fa'ñague* is how the experience is described.

This “word elevation” is not as singular as I have thus far suggested, as *ma'fa'ñague* carries significantly deeper meaning. It now includes a plural, perhaps tribal, consciousness that allows for the visitation to occur. *Ma* signals, if you will, an agreed-upon occurrence, which agreement has been made by a community of the dead. It is as if to say *ma'fa'ñague* means “they,” all of the dead, allowed the deceased mother to visit her living child. The dead gave the *difunta* permission to wander into the living world.

When I realized this, I made a note to myself to try to understand where this code of behavior in the afterlife originates in the here and now. Certainly, this research has not remotely touched upon this particular subject, and I imagine that throughout my research life, I will encounter more examples of this idea that I have learned thus far. Suffice it now to say that *konne*, within the *fa'ñague* context, becomes *ma'konne*, for when a child mysteriously disappears for a while, or forever. Similarly, when someone becomes ill, *malangu*, after wandering in the jungle, Chamorros use the term *ma'malangu* to explain the inexplicable ailment. Also, when a person is irresistible to another, the other person is *magodai* of the individual; therefore, when *difuntu* or *Taotao Mo'na* cannot resist being attracted to a living person, *man'magodai* becomes the *fa'ñague* descriptor.

As far as a tradition practiced in the afterlife that originates during life, I am drawn to one particular occurrence of *ma* that occurs outside of the *fa'ñague* context. This word is *ma fa'ñagu*, the term Chamorros use when describing the birth of a child. This corroborates the Chamorro epistemological aspect of *nene*, also described in Chapter 4. It makes me wonder if the Ancients understood that life and death are more alike than they are different.

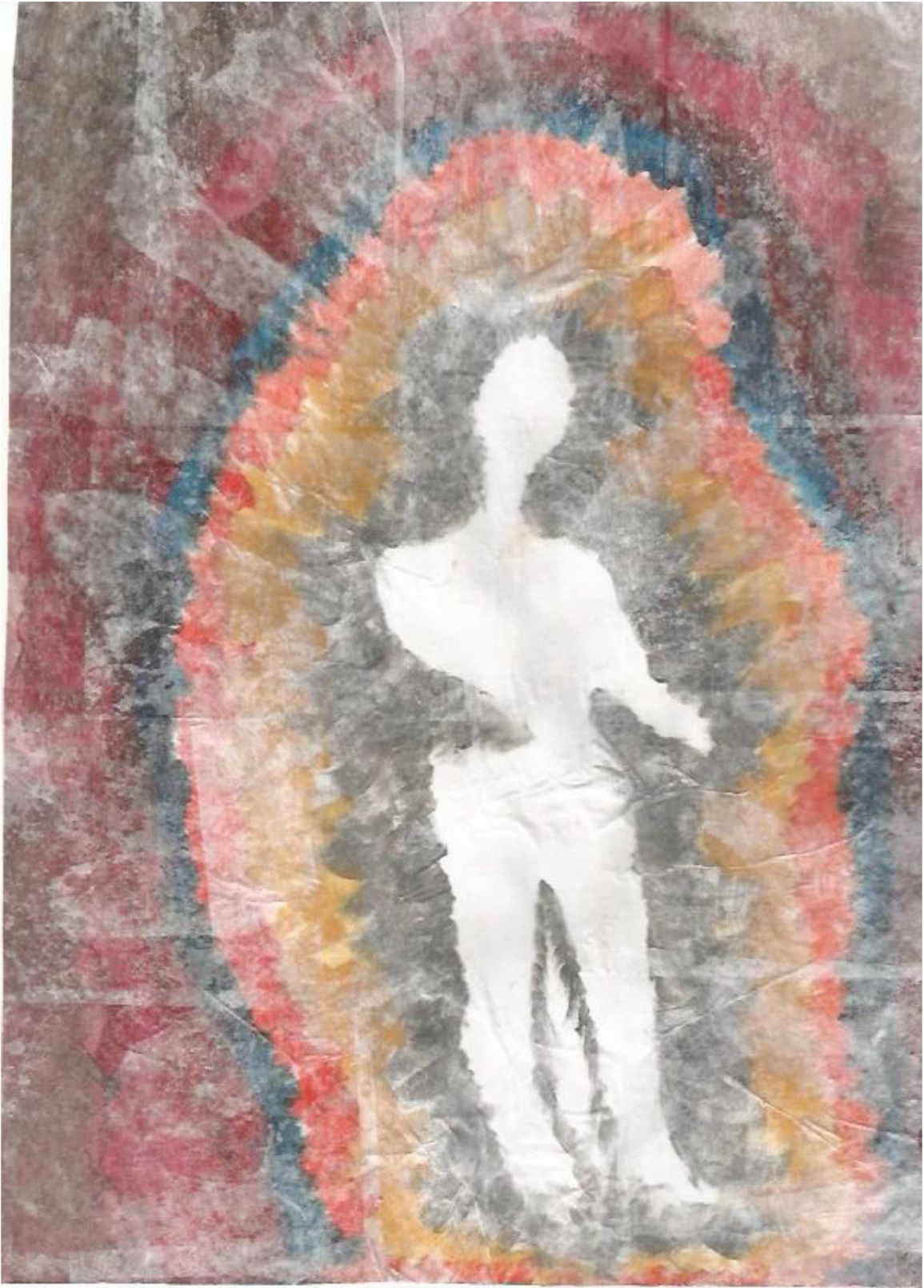


Figure 18. "*Difuntu*" by Dan Ho

B. Fa'ñague experiencers are distinct types.

Chamorros recognize three distinct types of individuals who are able to experience *fa'ñague*.

a. Gai-enabled experiencers.

These are individuals who recognize, and whom others recognize, are born experiencers of *fa'ñague*. In most cases, they inherit this specialized ability. These individuals typically experience *fa'ñague* at quite a young age, and continue to do so throughout their lives. In the Chamorro language, they are described as *gai'taotao*.

b. Risk-enabled experiencers.

These individuals come into their *fa'ñague* experience usually because they have violated either a family or cultural code of conduct, for example, by going into the jungle without first asking permission to enter from the *Taotao Mo'na* (done silently and usually in prayer form.) If an individual is doubtful, afraid, or particularly disrespectful of this protocol, Chamorros feel that he or she is likely to be visited and almost certainly made sick or even die.

c. Ma-enabled experiencers.

These individuals experience *fa'ñague* because the spirits find them attractive and irresistible. The experiences can vary from advantageous to frightening.

Analysis of Finding I

What things can actually define a culture?

Popular media wants us to think that it is food, music, dance, or costume. We hear it all the time from television chefs: “Just one bite of *linguini alla Romano* will tell you

what Italian culture is all about.” Really? Does a bite of cheesy noodles completely hold the entire wisdom of Rome, its mythology, economy, national identity, and *raison d’être*?

Clearly not. These declarations are not only simplistic, they are irresponsible. They allow individuals to easily limit their interest in — and opinions of — peoples. This “enabled ignorance” is exactly what Indigenous scholars live to combat. The more accurate and humanistic definitions of culture should be the most important motives behind food, music, dance, costume — and further, art, textiles, social behaviors and religion.

As I have suggested here, among the things that define Chamorro culture is *fa’ñaque*. It is a complex epistemology that not only features in the Native wisdom, but it drives other beliefs and perceptions within the cosmology, which I have enumerated in this finding. As delicious as our traditional cuisine is, our *titiyas manha* [coconut tortillas], cannot speak for the Chamorro way of knowing. In the first place, it is a version of the Mexican tortilla. As it happens, there are many scholars who continue to argue that pasta actually originated in China (IPO, n.d.).

Finding II. First Occurrences of *Fa’ñaque* Are at a Young Age

Among Chamorros, a profound belief holds that childhood is a spiritually vulnerable time, most especially one when an individual is most likely to experience *fa’ñaque*. During my fieldwork, I encountered the familiar, *man’amko*-borne warning, “*Na fan maopao hamyo naya, sa trabiha ma’tapangpangi y patgon.*” [Air yourselves out and get rid of your road smell because the baby has not yet been baptized.] Chamorros are acutely aware how delicate the balance of safety is with the young. Several of the participants of the online survey corroborated this finding.

1. Findings from the online survey.⁶

A. Age at first fa'ñague experience.

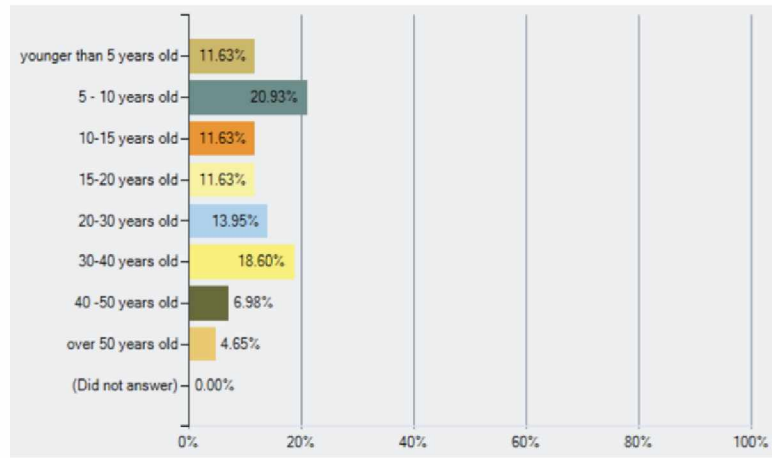


Figure 19. Responses: How old were you when you first experienced *fa'ñague*?

Among the survey respondents, 56% reported that they first experienced *fa'ñague* when they were minors, nearly one in four experiencing visitations before age five. Nearly 58% were between the ages of five and ten at the time of their initial *fa'ñague* experience; 22% between ten and 15; and 22% between 15 and 20.

In addition, survey participants were invited to share stories. Following are three excerpts from these narratives that attest to this finding.⁷

⁶ Any narratives that are quoted in this section, and the sections throughout, entitled “Findings from the online survey” are taken from the data submitted online by the respondents. This data set is unpublished and referenced only in this dissertation.

⁷ To protect their identities, pseudonyms are used throughout this paper.

B. Steven.

“Growing up, when a close relative is dying, or just passed, it is common to hear that they visited their loved ones before they die or when they have passed, to give a sense of comfort to the living.”

C. James.

“I know my daughter got visited by her grandmother.”

D. John.

“When I was about four years old, I saw some kids playing outside my window and they were teasing me because I couldn’t go out to play. I told my mom and she said no one was there.”

1. Findings from the in-person interviews.⁸

A. Tracey.

Tracey’s childhood is typical of many Chamorros born after World War II in that she lived part of it in the continental United States because of her family’s military ties. At a very young age, both in Guam and overseas, she would dream of long-dead relatives, such as her great-great grandfather. Often, she would report these dreams to her parents who advised her that they had come to her to ask for prayers.

When Tracey was in high school, she felt someone pulling at her feet while she was in bed. She initially thought it was either her brother or her father who were fond of playing practical jokes on her. Believing this, she resisted reacting, allowing herself to be relaxed by the pulling which, though was sleep-inducing for a while, suddenly escalated

⁸ Quotes referenced in this section, and the sections throughout, entitled “Findings from the in-person interviews,” are provided in full in Appendix E on page 168.

so that her entire bed was rocking. When it abruptly stopped, she sat up expecting to see her brother or father, but her room was empty. She lay back down and it started shaking again.

She burst into her parents' room, woke them up and asked if her dad was trying to trick her. Her father said no. It happened that brother was also asleep. Her mother advised her that the shaking was most likely Tracey's grandmother who had come to ask for prayers.

B. Theresa.

Theresa suffered the loss of a niece, Chyna, who she and her husband considered a *quirida*, a special young female relative. A few weeks after her death, Theresa heard another young niece, Lola, then three years old, speak to pictures on the wall saying, "That's you, that's you, that's you!"

The pictures on the wall were of Chyna.

C. Xavier.

Xavier is a divorced father of a young daughter. When she was a few months old, he was feeding her donuts as she sat in her high chair. His then-wife, the child's mother, became upset that he was feeding the pastry to the child; she felt the baby was too young for sugary food. Not wanting to further argue, he obliged her by taking the donut pieces away from the baby's food tray, and removing the plate of donuts entirely from the child's sight. He rotated in his chair to place it on the kitchen counter behind him. When he turned back around, he was surprised to see his daughter holding a whole donut.

Divorced shortly thereafter, Xavier began seeing random objects move by themselves in his new home. One day, when his now three-year-old daughter was visiting

him, he witnessed her bicycle moving independently in a hallway. Later, his daughter waved into the same empty hallway exclaiming, “Hi!”

D. Bartholomew.

Bartholomew was four or five years old when he first saw *Taotao Mo 'na*. He said they were very tall and mostly male. He never saw their heads and wondered if they had been decapitated. He remembers that “they” were “always around.” He recalls while camping on the beach, he cried because they were all around him, staring at him.

According to his mother, he cried constantly as a young child; she believed it was because he was continuously bothered by *Taotao Mo 'na*.

He says that “they” always wanted to take him away, and he would always go missing while in the company of others. For example, when he was three years old, he suddenly disappeared. His family frantically searched for him around the property for about an hour and a half, but could not find him. Without explanation, he walked out of a storage shed which had been previously, and remained, locked.

E. Marissa.

Marissa grew up in the southern village of Malesso. When she was a young girl, there were no street lamps. She recalled that on weekend nights during the full moon, the families in her neighborhood would go outside to enjoy the night air. They would share stories.

One of these nights, they all witnessed a large white ball rolling across the field. She recalled, “My mother, being the oldest said, *Shhhhh, fan 'mamakihu* [be quiet!].

“We asked why?” she said.

“My mother said, ‘Don’t worry about it. It’s the spirit.’ *Apaka, nai. Aye ilekna, Sabanas apaka.*” [It was white, of course. It was what they called “blanket white”].

“*Pues malófan* [so it passed us by], and it just so happen *na guaha guaka yan carabao gi* [that there were water buffalo and cows in the] field. And it went right through them! *Ti ma repara y bola. Ya ti man estopba.* [They didn’t see it. And they weren’t bothered by it]. It just passed through them.

“*Todu ham man’ma’añao, no? Pues ilekña si nana’hu, munga man’makuentos, munga man’mamaisen* [We were all scared, right? Then our mother said, don’t talk, and don’t ask about it], just pretend that you didn’t see it. *Sa taotao ti maolek un ayu, ilekña si nana’hu todú y te’tiempu* [That they weren’t good people, my mother would say all the time].”

Analysis of Finding II

Among the results of this research, this finding, first occurrences of *fa’ñague* occur at a young age, most beautifully conveys the essence of Chamorro cosmology, particularly as described by *nene* and *mona*.

If you recall, *nene* is a term that Chamorros use interchangeably to describe infants and the elderly. *Nene* demands of the Native to attend to the individual that newly enters the world in the same way that we are watchful for those about to exit it. As the Elder becomes *difuntu*, it makes every sense that his or her presence is the most real to children.

Similarly, as *mona* is both “ahead” and “in the past,” the idea that the young are the most conversant with the deceased makes a for a profound allegory. If you like, the connection between youth and the afterlife appears as the bridge between the dimensions we recognize as the beginning and the end; the two enable the infiniteness of the Native wisdom.

Finding III. *Fa’ñague* Can be Shared by Multiple Experiencers

A notable feature of *fa’ñague* is that, in some instances, a single visitation event may be experienced by two or more individuals.

1. Findings from the online survey.

As I was formulating the survey questions, I was careful to stay focused on the participants’ individual *fa’ñague* experience. The first draft of the survey included the question, “Did others in the room simultaneously experience the *fa’ñague* event?” However, I thought better of it. In the end, I excluded the question, believing it could prompt the respondent to include feedback from others in their responses.

Out of the 62 total online survey respondents, 21 of them shared a narrative. From these I was able to retrieve three accounts of multiple individuals experiencing a single *fa’ñague* event.

A. *Sara*.

“Shortly after my mom passed away she called out my name twice. I simply acknowledge her and told her not to scare my daughters. The second night after her passing, I was going through her belongings late at night and I can hear someone walking towards the back and I knew it was her because she had a very distinct walk that I recognize and also my

brother heard it as well and asked me if I was walking in the back that early morning and told him no. My mom also appeared to my cousins and pranked my auntie.”

B. Miguët.

“I am the child who lived the longest in the home with my mother. I am also the child who found her lifeless body in her bedroom. I struggled greatly with her passing and continue to miss her physical presence. On a trip away from home, I was sleeping and in the dream I saw my Mother's hand in great detail reach through a cloud of yellow "golden stars" and I reached up to hold/grab her hand. i [sic] woke up and my arm was outstretched. I was overjoyed. Similarly, my sister (the youngest child) had the same dream within the same period of time.”

C. Oscar.

“The most vivid experience that I got was when my father passed away in December 2006. My oldest son age 32 and I were talking outside our home on Saipan when we both heard the movement of lumber pieces being moved around and the sound was on the rooftop of my son's house. My son's home was my parents’ original home from when they returned back to Saipan from Guam. My son asked what could that sound be, since we knew that there were no lumber pieces. It was my dad saying his goodbyes to his family members. My sisters at their individual homes had their own experiences when our father passed that same night. Our father

passed away in San Antonio Texas, but we felt his presence and his last visit with us.”

2. Findings from the in-person interviews.

A. Roy.

It was after a long and late night in a music studio with his *paris*, two male friends who were godfathers to his sons, that Roy said that the three of them experienced *ma'fa'ñague*. This trio dedicated much of their time singing for their Catholic parish, as well as writing and recording original music intended for worship. One night at a very late hour they recorded a track, and then listened to the playback and realized that they were hearing a fourth voice. Roy said they believed this fourth voice to be a signal that the time to be making noise had long passed. They closed the studio and went home.

The next day, they were eager to listen to the track again, but discovered the voice was missing from the tape.

Another time, again, in the studio at a late hour, their recording session was interrupted by a loud and clear banging at the door. One of them immediately opened the door to find that no one was there.

A third incident occurred just outside of the studio in the driveway. As the men were walking toward their individual cars, a strong wind came out of nowhere. Roy said that he heard a voice clearly, as if a person spoke into his ear from centimeters away. It said, “Close your windows.”

“I heard that so clearly,” Roy said. “I didn’t say anything to the guys about it, but said, ‘Hey, maybe we should go,’ it’s getting late, it’s dark, and so on.”

So, they all got into their cars. As soon as Roy closed his car door, rain began to pour heavily. “It just poured,” he said.

A couple of days later, they were at the studio and Roy commented about the strange and sudden rain the night they last saw each other. His pari, Domingo, said, “Did you hear somebody tell you to close the window?”

“Holy cow!” Roy exclaimed, “I did!”

In fact, all three of them had heard the same message at the same time that evening.

B. Margaret.

Margaret is a woman in her sixties who can easily pass for being 25 years younger. She is energetic, lithe, and charismatic. She recounted an event when she was a freshman in college.

She had just returned to the island after having spent her junior-high and high-school years in San Diego. Back home on the island, she enrolled at the University of Guam. Like most sisters from large families in her generation, she was charged with looking after her younger, middle-school-aged siblings, who were part of the group that witnessed her *ma'fa'ñague*.

By her own admission, Margaret was a feisty, know-it-all young adult who felt that she knew the real world that existed beyond the shores of Guam. It was an attitude her mother had longed warned her about, that it could get her in trouble with other people and with the spirits as well. None of this mattered to Margaret at the time this story takes place.

She is 19 years old. She has driven to a hamburger stand near the university to meet up with her then-boyfriend and his friend. In her car are her two younger siblings, a brother and a sister. Sometime during their dinner, she has a disagreement with her boyfriend and abruptly announces that she and her siblings are going home. On the way to their cars, Margaret walks around the building to the bathroom, leaving the others to wait in the parking lot for her to return.

As she turns the building toward the bathroom, she sees a black cat on the sidewalk a few steps ahead of her. She moves left to avoid it, but it mirrors her movement. So, she moves right and it mirrors her once more, blocking her. After a third maneuver to the left, she becomes impatient and kicks the cat. It rolls over three times, lands on its feet and stares at her.

“I still get goose bumps remembering it,” said Margaret.

She goes into the restroom.

When she returns, the others notice she is acting strangely. One of them thinks she is high on drugs, which to them seemed reasonable as she had just returned from San Diego and was probably exposed to the new drug culture of the time. They ask her what is wrong.

She does not answer.

Her response is a violent outburst of gibberish that includes breaking a glass bottle and holding it up to the neck of her boyfriend. The others calm her down, wrestle her into the backseat of her car, then drive her and her siblings to her parents' house.

They cannot not explain what just happened.

Her parents take the incoherent Margaret, who is now unable to see, to the Naval Hospital where she undergoes several tests, none of which could point to drugs, or an obvious infection or obstruction in her eyes. After several dramatic hours, she is sent home.

Her desperate parents know to take her to a nearby *suruhamu*, a traditional healer who Margaret identified as Tan Supiano (now deceased) who lived along the sharp karst cliff line in the village of Mangilao. Margaret recounted that upon arriving, Tan Supiano knows exactly why her parents had brought her to him.

The old man instructs them to take Margaret home, anoint her with oils and specifically, at every sunset, that her father burn a shirt he had worked in that had absorbed his sweat from the day's work. He would do this, Tan Supiano instructed, outside Margaret's bedroom window for three days. They follow his other directions as given.

On the third day as Margaret's father burns his shirt, its flames shoot up higher than they had previously, and the smoke changes color from grey to white. Inside, Margaret starts to convulse. A voice screams from inside the room and rushes outside.

Margaret wakes up and starts crying.

When her mother asks her why she is crying, she replies, "Because I can see."

C. Marissa.

If you recall, Marissa's first experience with *Taotao Mo'na* was in her home village of Malesso when, as a child, she and her family and neighbors witnessed a ball of white light roll across a field. As an adult, she had another story to tell that takes place in another village, Santa Rita.

Her marital home, which is here, is full of *fa'ñague* activity. Marissa explains this is why her home is filled with statues of the saints and there is always a candle that burns. In fact, she makes it a point to turn on her foyer lights at six o'clock in the evening in case a candle should go out in the middle of the night.

She recounted a time when she and her family left the island to go on vacation, and she asked her neighbor to turn on the light for her. When she returned, the neighbor reported that could only bring himself to open the door the first time, and *only* then, because he saw several “pairs of eyes” looking at him when he opened the door. As a result, he never came back to shut it off at daylight. The light remained lit for all the days she had been away.

Marissa says that she often hears footsteps inside the house when she is praying, which makes her pray even harder.

“Sometimes the door slams,” she says. “I’m not going to turn around. I’m not going to give up my prayers. Let whatever is back there fall.”

Her mother reported seeing the same sets of eyes looking at her at Marissa’s front door. Once, while on a trip from the family house in Malesso to the north for a doctor’s appointment, she stopped by Marissa’s house.

Her mother told her, “*Ai adai, an u baba y peta'mu, kalan un miyon na man'matai man'a'attan yu* [Oh my goodness, when I opened your door, it was as though one million eyes were looking at me!]”

D. Tom.

Tom admits that he grew up skeptical of *fa'ñague*. His father would say that if he stayed up too late, and he started smelling flowers, then it was a sign that Tom’s dead

grandparents were passing through to check up on him. Once in a while, he would actually play a trick on Tom to convince him that *fa'ñague* had taken place.

Aside from his father's pranks, Tom had no real *fa'ñague* experience until he was an adult.

A close cousin, Jesse, passed away. He recalled that he felt particularly sad by his death because the last text conversation they shared was in autumn, and that they were looking forward to seeing each other the following summer in Guam.

His cousin had prompted the exchange by texting him to say that he was making a surprise visit to Guam and hoped that he would see Tom. Tom had made plans to travel to the U.S. and would miss him, but assured him that they would definitely see each other. There was big news to share. Jesse, who was in the U.S. military stationed in South Korea, would finally be reassigned to Guam by the summer. Tom was so happy about this because Jesse had tried his entire military career to be stationed to work back home but it never happened. Now a return date had finally been made.

Jesse suffered a heart attack a few weeks into the new year, and died.

One night, while preparing punch to serve to the friends and family at one of the nine rosaries traditionally held after death, Tom said that a five-gallon bottle of water suddenly slid across his work surface and fell onto the floor. He and a stunned cousin looked at each other, unable to comment on the randomness of the 40 pounds of bottled water moving by itself.

That evening, Tom went to bed after working on a eulogy he was preparing for Jesse's funeral mass. He had a dream. In it, he found himself on a crowded train station walking toward a crowd of people saying goodbye to Jesse, who was wearing his military

uniform. Jesse recognized Tom and signaled to wait while he said his goodbye to the others. Then he approached and they hugged. Jesse whispered into his ear, “Yes, that was me with the water.”

Tom jolted up in bed and started crying.

He told his wife, “Freaking Jesse just confirmed!”

Analysis of Finding III

This particular finding — that a *fa’ñague* event can be experienced by multiple individuals — makes the case that science argues: Where is the proof? While it is entirely plausible that an individual account of a *fa’ñague* event might be real, it would seem that several eyewitnesses to the occurrence would make it much less questionable.

During my fieldwork, I met several people who were converted skeptics, individuals who were born into less-traditional Chamorro households with a more Westernized (Americanized) outlook. Consider Theresa, whose accounts of her grandmother’s feet are documented in this dissertation. When I interviewed her, she was accompanied by her white, American husband⁹. She spoke of a time when she smelled “stinky feet” in her car which had just been cleaned and professionally detailed. It was so rank, that she pulled over to inspect the car but was unable to find a source of the smell. Worse, no one else could smell it.

This odorous curiosity kept its pace over several months. During a re-telling of this experience, Theresa’s sister-in-law (her husband’s sister) told her that their father

⁹ I feel it is important for me to state that Theresa’s husband is not Chamorro, because this study was limited to Chamorro respondents. However, it was interesting to me that a non-Native *difuntu* and experiencer made its way into my research in a way that supports my findings.

was famous for having stinky feet. A few months later, Theresa smelled the odor again.

This time so did the other passengers in the car, including her husband.



Figure 20. "*Taotao Mo'na*" by Dan Ho

Finding IV: *Fa'ñague* by *Taotao Mo'na* Occurs Only in Guam

Taotao Mo'na-related *fa'ñague* experiences occur only in Guam.

They are most common outdoors, and almost exclusively near water, a section of bedrock that has surfaced above the soil line, along old paths, and along areas which have been recognized as places of ingress or egress, for example, from inland toward a river, a path over a ridge, or such other established path.¹⁰

Interestingly, I encountered one case of visitation by *man baba* occurring off-island. Margaret, whom I interviewed in Guam, reported that she encountered an *utak* (a white bird) on a California highway, which she understood as a sign that her mother had passed.¹¹ This event adds fuel to my idea that some of the spiritual experiences which are based on foreign ideas are materially different than *fa'ñague*. At the conclusion of my research, there was no additional data like this for me to make a definitive finding that off-island occurrences of *man baba* are the norm.

¹⁰ I made sure to avoid asking my research participants to specifically share either on-island or off-island *fa'ñague* experiences; rather, I asked if they occurred in places either familiar or unfamiliar to either themselves or the *difuntu*. It became clear after concluding my fieldwork that *fa'ñague* by *Taotao Mo'na* appears to occur only in Guam (and perhaps the other islands in the Marianas). When I reviewed the online survey data which concluded a few months later, I did actually find that some of the narratives corroborated this finding.

¹¹ This account is detailed on page 40.

1. Findings from the online survey.

I did not launch this project with the slightest idea that *Taotao Mo'na* behavior was so specific, therefore I did not craft any survey questions that were in any way related. However, among the narratives, a few words are worth quoting here:

A. Ernesto.

“Another belief is called “*Henemhum Tasi* (derived from the Chamorro word *homhum* — or dusk/dark). This belief is said by fishermen that right before the sun sets in the horizon, a flash of light will appear and that is when the spirit world is allowed to our world. All hunting or fishing (killing of animals) shall cease for we might kill the spirits at that moment.”

2. Findings from the in-person interviews.

A. Tracey.

At one point in her life, Tracey worked at the Guam Superior Court building as a night security guard. Part of her routine included walking the halls of the building to check to see whether any of the law clerks had either stayed late, or not locked up, so she could log this information into her watch record. Sometimes, if she knew that the building was totally empty, she would catch a quick nap in her car during her meal break.

One night after such a break, she re-entered the courthouse to find the floor and walls covered in what she describes as worms, or “some type of caterpillar.” She said they were everywhere; in the ceiling, on all the walls and windows, and on the floors. They crunched under the weight of her anxious steps as she crept around, eyeing the room in disbelief.

Panicked, she ran out of the building and called her supervisor to report this incident.

Her supervisor advised her to calm down, and to return inside after a few minutes to see if anything had changed. By this time, the sun began to rise. When she returned indoors, every trace of what she had just seen had vanished. Confused and shaken, she consulted a friend later that morning who advised her that the *Taotao Mo 'na* had made their presence known to her.

B. Xavier.

Xavier had fallen asleep on the couch in the living room while his wife and newly born daughter were sleeping in their bedroom. He stayed on the couch, he said, because he worked the night shift at the Guam International Airport, and did not want to cause more disturbance than was necessary for him to get ready for work while his wife and infant child slept.

Xavier heard the alarm, then opened his eyes to look at it resting on the coffee table near to him. He reached out to it to turn it off; yet, to his surprise, he could not move. It was as though he was being held in place by a force that could not be seen. Seconds later, he was able to sit up to turn it off. But as he tried to stand on his feet, he felt a pair of arms pull him back. "It" held him across the chest into the back of the chair.

Xavier strained in a quiet panic to maintain silence so that he would not wake his daughter. A second or two later, the invisible arms let him go, and he was able to stand up.

Again, he was pulled back. He looked down and several pairs of arms were holding him tightly. In an instant, the arms retreated behind him, and he was able to

shake his fear to stand up. This time, he felt as “someone” hopped onto him and he fell back into the chair. He could feel an actual body sitting in his lap.

Eventually, Xavier made it into the shower to get ready for work. He told me that he remembered feeling mad, and remained quite angry even as he walked into the office at the airport nearly an hour later. A co-worker remarked at his mood and appearance, saying he looked as though he had just seen a ghost.

After a few minutes at his desk, something from inside him flew out the window.

C. Bernardo.

Bernardo, a Vietnam War veteran, enjoyed military base privileges which allowed him to buy food at the Navy food commissary located in Sumay, Guam. Sumay was an Ancient village perched on what is now one of the busiest ports in the Western Pacific. Today it is the site of a United States Naval Substation, and is no longer inhabited by Native Chamorros who lived there for hundreds of years before they were relocated by the military.

Fa'ñague by *Taotao Mo'na* is common here. Anyone from the south (like me) has grown up with stories from relatives either employed by the Navy or the federal government who encountered *Taotao Mo'na* in this area. They were usually unsettled by the experience.

Bernardo, though he is not from the south, also experienced *fa'ñague* while shopping for food at the commissary years ago. That day, a stranger came up to him and that they began a short conversation. Essentially, Bernardo said, the stranger asked for food.

But his wife, who was with him at the time (and during our interview) said that he was talking to himself. No one was there.

To this day, Bernardo swears that he was talking to an actual person, although his wife steadfastly disagrees.

I asked Bernardo if he thought his might be a form of post-traumatic stress from his time in Vietnam. He did not believe so. He was never exposed to combat or violence while in Vietnam. He went there after the war ended, to work on what he referred to as the “nation-building team.”

D. Bartholomew.

If you recall, Bartholomew’s *Taotao Mo’na* encounters were quite scary for him and that he saw *Taotao Mo’na* around him constantly.

As a teenager, he left the island with his parents to live in the United States and did not have similar experiences while living there. But when he returned to Guam, *fa’ñaque* started again.

He was visiting his family’s property and happened to be standing on a street which he said was always wet. This was because it was paved over a spring that only percolated upward depending on the height of the water table, so it must have been poured when it was dry. It is here that he says he saw them again. They were tall, like he remembered, so tall that he had never really seen their heads.

Analysis of Finding IV

One so often hears in the Indigenous stories the importance of ancestral lands to a Native people that it can be easily dismissed as mere marketing, that is to say, a way to commodify it within a philosophy-less, capital society. But as Natives know, the land

holds much more meaning than its market value. It carries not only an ecology that supports the tribe's life, but it physically frames a space for its spirituality and self-expression.

It then makes complete sense that the Chamorros' most Elder *difuntu* are experienced and manifested on the island of Guam. Certainly, this is not a singular event in the Indigenous experience. Throughout time, every culture has celebrated the souls of mountains and rivers, from Mt. Olympus as the home of the gods in Ancient Greece, (Hamilton, 1942), to Koya-San in Japan, where modern Japanese believe the immortal Kobo Daishi remains to be a source of enlightenment to human kind. (Nicoloff, 2007).

Finding V: *Fa'ñague* by *Difuntu* Can Be Experienced Anywhere

1. Findings from the online survey.

It stands to reason that the Native experience best and most often occurs on Native land because our identities are closely aligned with and held by our ancestral soil. One cannot imagine that a Native southwestern American shaman achieves a full spiritual experience in the Loire Valley of France. Nor might a Māori recognize the Rio Grande as a river that was once an ancestor of his who walked the land.

Yet, most of the Western experiences of afterlife visitation I encountered during my research were regularly reported to occur at or near where the souls involved lived or died. Think about it: The ghost of Sarah Winchester walks, they say, at the Winchester Mansion in California and *only* there. The spirits at Salem, Massachusetts, or Amityville, Long Island, New York, have been active only in these towns.

This is certainly not the case with the *fa'ñague* experiences by *difuntu*. Among the 62 individuals who participated in the online survey, only half of the reported *fa'ñague*

experiences occurred in places that the deceased was familiar with, while over 40% took place in areas unfamiliar to the *difuntu*. Among these “unfamiliar places” were rooms and locations not known to the deceased, including distant lands and countries.

Consider the following:

A. Varied locations of *fa’ñague* by *difuntu*.

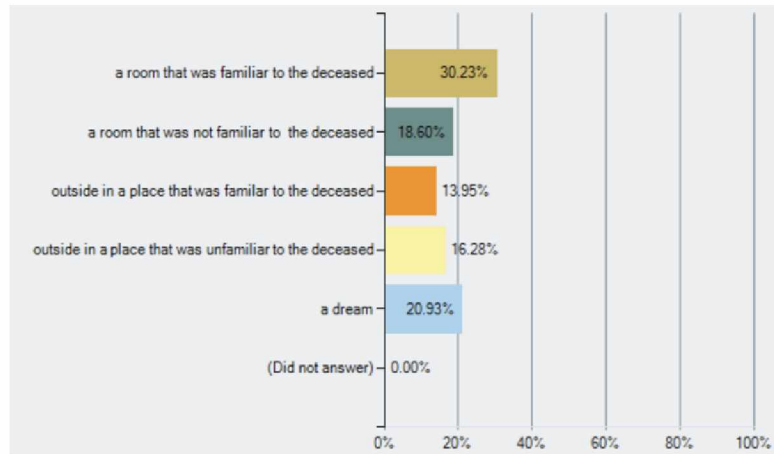


Figure 21. Responses: Where did the *fa’ñague* experience take place?

Several of the narratives corroborate this finding:

B. John.

John writes that when he was in the U.S. Army stationed in Germany, he was visited by his mother who died the evening before.

He shared that he had to walk to the motor pool to check on his guards. As he walked passed the commissary, one of the freezer doors slammed shut. The next morning, he was informed that his mother died.

C. Timothy.

Timothy wrote that his dying father visited him in New England. When he returned to Guam for the burial, his father’s hand pressed on his shoulder in the family home a few days before the funeral.

D. Edward.

While hiking in Arizona, Edward heard a voice and recognized that it was familiar to him. It belonged to his deceased grandfather.

E. Bernice.

Bernice first experienced *fa'ñague* while she was in the mainland United States visiting relatives. She was taking a nap when all of a sudden, she felt a familiar touch, that someone was massaging her legs.

Moments later, her parents came into her room to tell her that her maternal grandmother had passed away. She told her father of this experience and he replied that it was her grandmother's way of saying goodbye.

2. Findings from the in-person interviews.

A. Tracey.

Tracy once asked her mother to promise to send her a sign that she went to heaven when she died. Her mother agreed. The sign would be the scent of a tropical flower, known in Guam as *ilang-ilang* (*Canarium odorata*).

Years later, Tracey was married and living in Tennessee. One day, she smelled *ilang-ilang* and knew instantly that her mother had died.

She was so sure about the sign that she immediately walked out of the house to where her husband was working to tell him that her mother had just passed away.

She said, "I wanted to believe it was honeysuckle but it wasn't."

B. Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was born and raised in Guam, then moved away at age 18 to live in the mainland United States for 22 years. She never experienced *fa'ñague* while living in

Guam. It was only after she was married and living in her own house in California that she was visited by her deceased grandmother.

“I opened up the closet to clean, and I saw her feet,” Elizabeth said.

When she was a child, her grandmother would warn her that if she did not behave, she would come back after she died to scare her into being a good girl. She used to beg her grandmother not to say that, or else she might scare her “to death.”

C. Bernardo.

Bernardo remembers the day. January 2, 1971.

A young Army soldier, he had taken a 30-day service break and was staying with his sisters in Oxnard, California, on his way to a deployment in Vietnam.

The next day, January 3rd, he found out that his father had passed away. He notified his command unit in Kentucky of the death, and they instructed him to travel to Guam immediately so he could attend to the funeral, but not to proceed to Vietnam. Rather, he would return to Kentucky for final orders. He followed the Army’s instructions, and on his way back from Guam to his command post, stopped once more in Oxnard for an overnight layover. It was here that he was visited by his father.

“My father was standing there wearing white shirt and khaki trousers,” Bernardo remembered. “He said, ‘Do not be afraid.’”

“I’m going to tell you this right now,” his father told him, “you’re not going to Vietnam as a combat soldier. You’re going back to Guam to help out your mother until everything is settled down. Do not worry about anything, you’re going to be safe.”

In truth, Bernardo did not go to Vietnam as a combat soldier. Instead, he went there as part of the Peace Treaty Commission, a trip that was delayed until then-President Richard Nixon signed the Peace Treaty Pact.

He said, “As soon as I got to Vietnam, I was told to take off my uniform and wear civilian clothes.”

In Bernardo’s case, the visitation not only occurred in a place unknown to his deceased father, but he received a message from him that played out as it was given. In addition, his eyes and ears were not the only senses stimulated by his *fa’ñague* experience.

“I could even smell the Camel cigarettes smoke,” he said. “He used to smoke. He smoked a lot.”¹²

D. Margaret.

Margaret was living in Ft. Lewis, Washington, when she was summoned by her family on a morning in early February to drive down to San Jose, California. Her mother lay critically ill in a hospital.

She had been in visiting her just two months prior and did not want to leave her side, knowing her illness was terminal. But her mother told her, “*Hanao y haga’hu tati. Munga magatcha y anu nuebu guini. Sigi yan un espiha y familiamu. Lao fattu antes birfdey’mu.*” [Go back home, my daughter. Don’t catch the new year here. Go and attend to your family. But come back before your birthday.]

¹² Very few of the *fa’ñague* experiences in this research include these many sensory stimulations. Typically, a single sense is involved. This is not to say that multi-sensory events are necessarily rare; they are just uncommon in this research.

After receiving the call, Margaret asked a female cousin from her mother's side to drive with her from Washington to California. They started out in the morning and passed the next several hours singing Chamorro songs and sharing memories. As they continued to drive into the night, a large white bird suddenly flew directly toward the car's windshield and startled the women.

Without exchanging words, her cousin started to pray the rosary for the dead. When they arrived in San Jose a few hours later, they found out that her mother died about the same time the bird, the *utak*, appeared out of the darkness.

Analysis of Finding V

This particular finding might be the most troubling for Westerners, as this particular feature of *fa'ñague* most approximates ghostlike behavior. In the most horrific movies, people are always *running* from ghosts, which makes me tend to believe that a pervasive theme in Western afterlife visitation is the idea that ghosts move with you. This appears to be the behavior that *difuntu* exhibit. Yet Chamorros do not find this frightening; rather, as this research suggests, we are soothed by it.

During my research, I came across the work of Chinese American author Andrew Lam, who recounts in *East Eats West: Writing in Two Hemispheres* (2010) that his Chinese grandmother, in her last days, believed her dead husband crossed the ocean to be with her as she passed from this earth, in the form of butterflies. Lam presents this visitation so beautifully, that even the Westerner cannot help but be comforted by its warm telling. This is the same kind of warmth that Chamorros experience when we are visited by our dead.

Finding VI. Chamorros Are Able to Immediately Recognize the Form of *Fa'ñague* Visitor.

In nearly every case, research participants could readily recognize the form of their *fa'ñague* visitor.

If a *difuntu* was involved, the visited immediately knew exactly who he or she was. If *Taotao Mo'na* was present, respondents usually knew right away that an Ancient had made his or her presence known. Bruises of a particular form are never curiosities. They are always recognized as a form of *fa'ñague* and they appeared on the skin because the spirits were *man'magodai*.

1. Findings from the online survey.

The following charts help to build a case for this finding:

A. The identity of the deceased in the *fa'ñague* event.

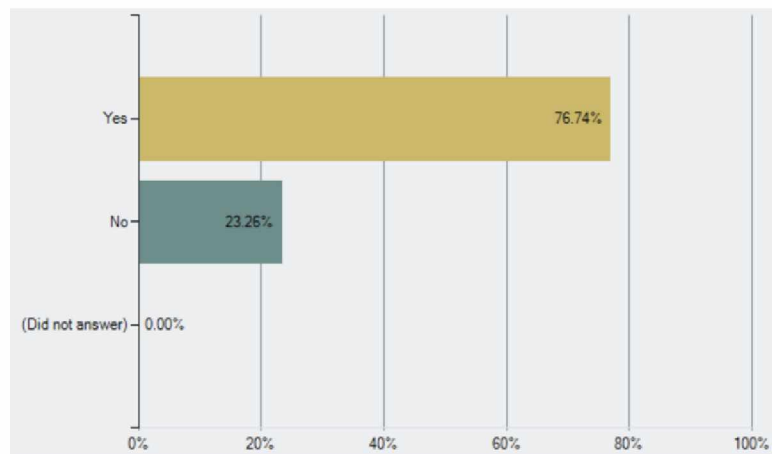


Figure 22. Responses: Did you know the deceased individual in your *fa'ñague* experience?

A majority of the participants claimed to know the identity of the individual who visited them from the afterlife.

B. The ability to differentiate between a ghost, spirit, or deceased individual.

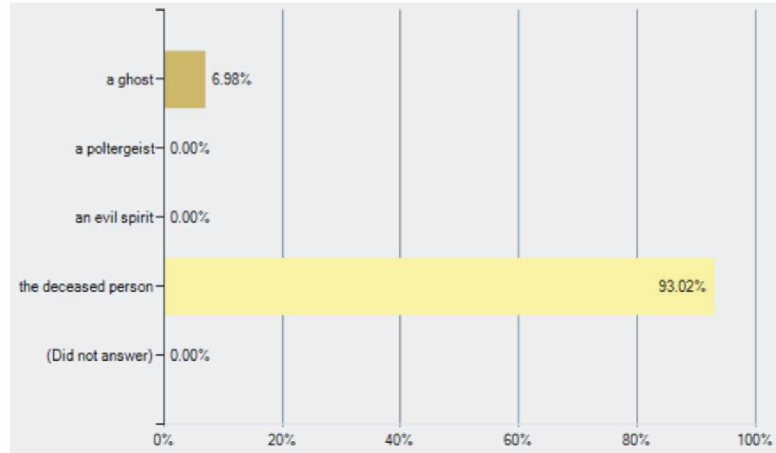


Figure 23. Responses: When you were visited, did you think it was a ghost, a poltergeist, an evil spirit or the deceased person?

Nearly all of the participants were able to differentiate a *difuntu* from other spiritual forms.

C. The sensory experiences in the fa'ñague event.

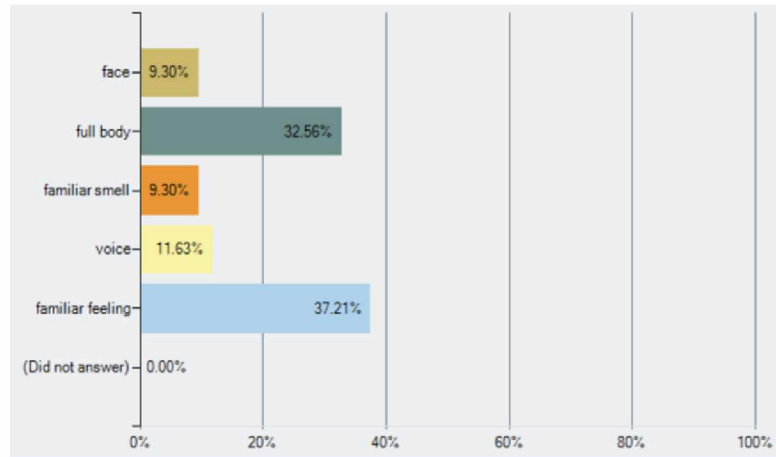


Figure 24. Responses: What form did the deceased take during the *fa'ñague* experience?

Almost 42% of the respondents were able to identify the *fa'ñague* visitor by seeing a face or full body, and nearly 22% of them able to identify a familiar voice and

smell. 37% recognized their visitor from more abstract sensory experiences, such as a familiar feeling.

In addition, the following data suggests that this familiarity allowed for an experience that was not frightening.

D. Fear during the fa'ñague event.

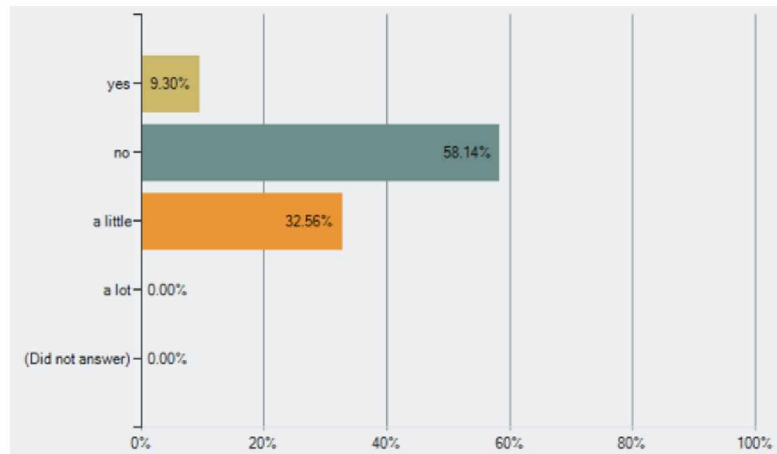


Figure 25. Responses: Were you scared?

Less than one-tenth of the participants reported being afraid during the *fa'ñague* experience. Nearly one-third of them were “a little” afraid, while over half of them were not.

To Chamorros, *fa'ñague* is not the same as a ghostly haunting which is often scary and horrific. Rather, they are comforting events. They also deliver wisdom and enlightenment, as the following charts suggest:

E. Comfort following the fa'ñague event.

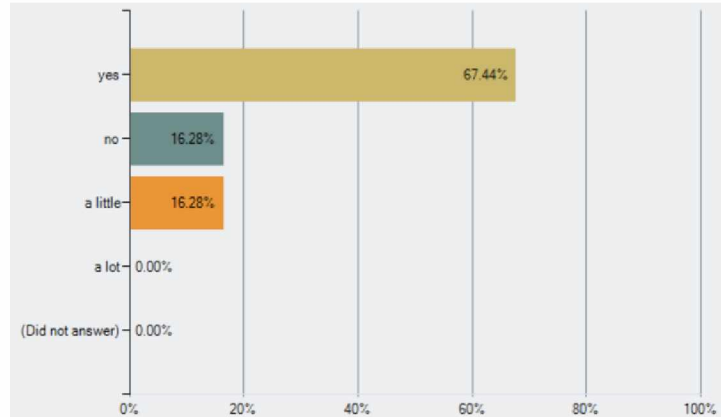


Figure 26. Responses: Did you feel a sense of comfort?

Nearly 84% of the survey respondents reported feeling some comfort by their *fa'ñague* experience and less than two-tenths of the participants felt slightly comforted. In total, over two-thirds felt positively about being visited.

F. Messages relayed during the fa'ñague event.

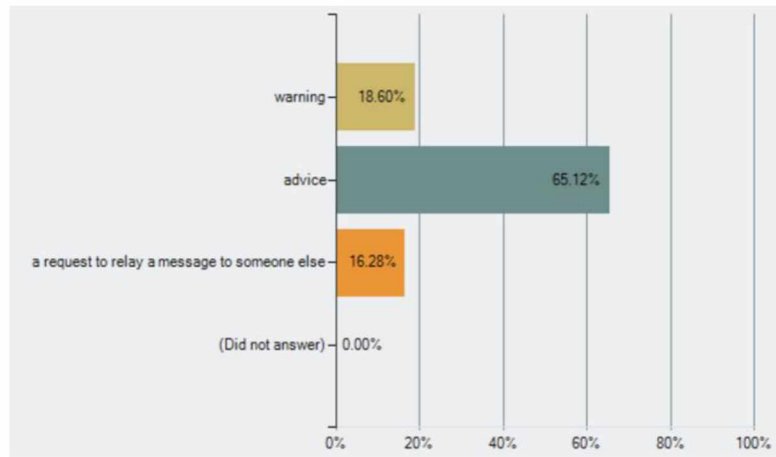


Figure 27. Responses: Did the deceased have a message for you?

All of the participants reported that the visits included a message, most in the form of advice, and a lesser amount in the form of warnings or information to relay to another descendant.

Following are excerpts from narratives shared online:

G. Antonia.

“On my mom’s 10th anniversary, I went promising that I will go visit her at her graveside every day during the rosary. I so happen to miss one day being very busy preparing for the last day. The following morning, I was alone at my brother’s house when I heard my mom calling for me.”

H. Ignacio.

“I looked into his room and saw the hospital bed just like in the dream. This is how I knew that maybe an ancestor or relative was trying to warn me through my dream of my uncle’s passing.”

I. Clara.

“My deceased mother whom I was grieving for sat by my side while I was sitting on my bed. I felt her presence and I saw the mattress depressed up and my back touched, as if she was consoling me...”

J. Steven.

“When a close relative is dying, or just passed, it is common to hear they visited their loved ones...to give a sense of comfort to the living. They do not haunt or scare...”

K. Sara.

“Shortly after my mom passed, she called out my name twice. The second night after her passing, I was going through her belongings late at night and I can hear someone walking towards the back and I knew it was her because she had a very distinct walk.”

2. Findings from the in-person interviews.

A. Tracey.

The scent of *ilang-ilang* came to Tennessee, so Tracey returned to Guam for her mother’s funeral. The evening prior to her burial, she and her siblings gathered at her sister’s house where they talked into the night recalling stories about their mother.

She said, “We were laughing and crying at the same time.”

Her sister owned a lamp Tracey described as a clown figure holding up balloons. It stood by another statue of the revered Catholic priest, Padre Pio.

“This clown lamp started dancing around,” Tracey said. “It was hopping like this and like that and we all recognized it.”

They agreed that it was their mother telling them it was late and they should go to sleep.

B. Margaret.

A year after her mother died in California, Margaret’s life took a frustrating turn.

Back in Fort Lewis, Washington, her marriage began to fall apart. She became angry, disillusioned, and sad. The rebellious urge of her youth returned with a vengeance. She became restless for a personal reinvention.

One of the changes she decided to make was to leave the Catholic faith to become Lutheran. To this end, she attended services and classes at a new church, becoming convinced that it would be a good way for her and the children to move on from their painful recent past.

The night before she was to register at the Lutheran church office, she had a dream. In it, her mother is still alive. Margaret walks into their church in Guam and sees her mother praying with all the Christian Mothers she had grown up with. She walks up to them, looks at her mother, and recognizes her face, but when she looks at the others, they are faceless. Margaret is horrified.

As the dream continues, she and mother walk toward her car. Margaret sits in the driver's seat and then reaches over to unlock the passenger door for her mother. When she opens it, sheets of paper that had been on the seat blow out of the door as she steps in.

The dream ends.

The next morning was the day Margaret was scheduled register at the Lutheran church. She readied the children, and then they walked out of the house toward her car. She sat in the driver's seat, then reached over to open the passenger door for her oldest child to get in.

As this happened, the registration papers she had just placed on her dashboard flew out of the car, just as the sheets of paper had in her dream the night before.

She knew immediately that this was her mother, warning her to remain strong in her Catholic tradition.

C. Bartholomew.

At the time of his interview, Bartholomew had just moved into a family property that was previously rented to tenants. He was spending some time and energy cleaning and repainting the house, including replacing light fixtures and appliances. One evening, he noticed that the lights were flickering and wondered whether he had made a mistake installing a fixture. Rather than attempting to reinstall it, he called it a night.

Before he went to bed, he took a selfie to document the work he had done for that day. He looked at the picture on his phone and saw a white ball. — an orb. It was “the kind you see on those ghosts shows on cable TV.”

He said he immediately knew that it was his grandmother, whose death anniversary was around the time of this event. He believed she was reaching out to him from the afterlife to remind him of her stern warnings that individuals should not make noise after nine o’clock in the evening.

Analysis of Finding VI

Among the many great advantages Indigenous people have in today’s world is that while Westerners grapple with deciding what is right or wrong, and what is good or bad for the individual and society, we tend to not share that struggle. This is because we have had the advantage of being part of a long tradition of spirituality, both in theory and practice, that allows us to navigate the ups and downs of life with a near-innate philosophy.

One specific, albeit controversial example is abortion. As an engaged American citizen, I understand the argument from both sides, and I know good and intelligent people who find themselves having opposing points of view about this issue. I, however,

find my position pre-determined, because my Native culture tells me that all stages of life are vital. I know, without question or struggle, that the seed carried by the bird in its entrails is the same as the tree that bore and will bear its fruit. Therefore, for me, the rights of the unborn are not measured by the arguments for gender rights or political beliefs. My position is a Chamorro one, a view that the dead, therefore the unborn, share the day.

We can see these Indigenous philosophies in full formation with the generations-old struggle of land between the United States government and Native American tribes. Where the federal government believes that fiat currency can equitably replace the seized sacred lands, and the mismanagement of trusts that hold them, the tribespeople flatly feel otherwise.¹³ They do not struggle with weighing the land's value and the importance of trust in the way politicians measure it with dollars.

So, too, is the instinct of knowing that takes over when a Chamorro experiences *fa'ñague*. There is simply no question as to the nature or form of the visitation event. There is no struggle to understand its value and meaning.

¹³ There are several efforts to protect sacred lands from sale and taxation by the Federal Government, among them Native American Land Conservancy (www.nativeamericanland.org) is one such organization that focuses on this work among intercultural groups in Southern California.

Finding VII. *Fa'ñague* Can Occur Over an Individual's Lifetime and Any Time After Death of the *Difuntu*

Although Chamorros recognize that children are most susceptible to *fa'ñague*, it can occur at any age, and any number of times over a person's lifetime. In addition, it may occur any time near or after the death of the *difuntu*.

The following data speaks to this finding:

1. Results of the online survey.

A. Age at first *fa'ñague* experience.

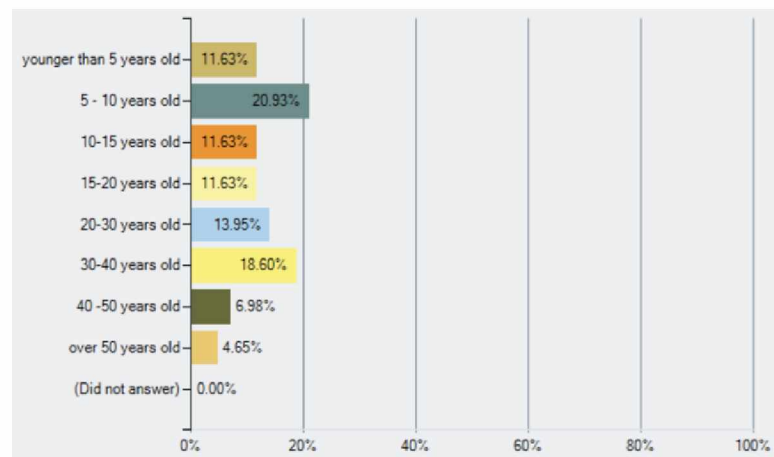


Figure 28. Responses: How old were you when you first experienced *fa'ñague*?

Participants claimed to have first experienced *fa'ñague* at any time over an average lifetime. About one-third of the respondents reported that they were age ten and younger at the time of their first *fa'ñague* event. Nearly the same amount reported having their first experience as adults.

B. Frequency of *fa'ñague* experiences.

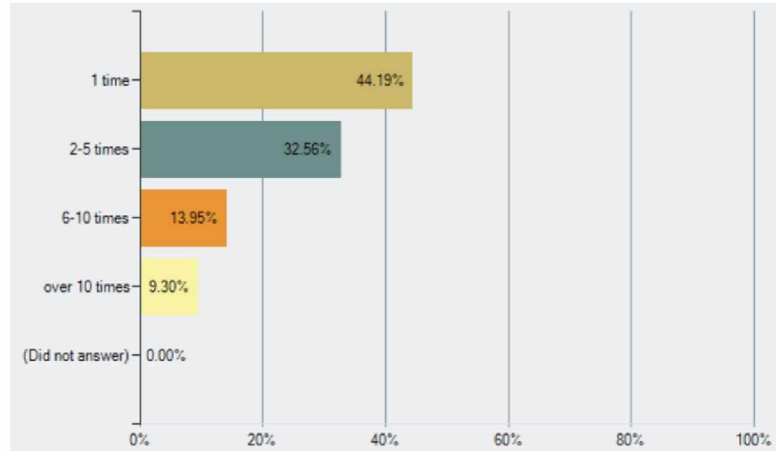


Figure 29. Responses: How often do you experience *fa'ñague*?

Over half of the participants reported that they continue to experience visitations after their initial *fa'ñague* event.

C. Timeframe of *fa'ñague* visits by a *difuntu*.

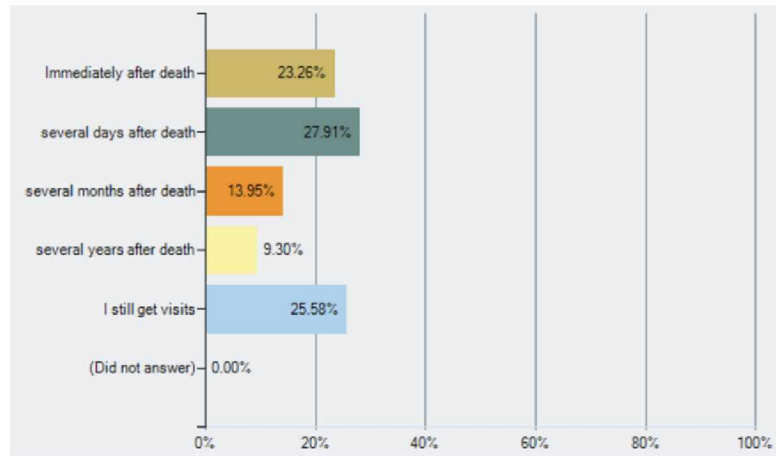


Figure 30. Responses: How soon after death did the *fa'ñague* experience occur?

Fa'ñague by *difuntu* occurs either immediately after death, or in the months and years that follow it, in equal measure. Nearly one-quarter of the respondents experience sustained visitations long after the *difuntu* has died.

From the survey narratives:

D. Elena.

“In my case I have one fanague [sic] experience that has been occurring for 14 years and I don’t think it will ever stop.”

E. Timothy.

“When my father died he visited me twice. Once as he was dying — I was living in New England at the time, and once in the family living room in Guam a few days before his funeral.”

F. Ysrael.

“My brother-in-law’s little brother had died a couple of months prior to my experience.”

G. Lourdes.

“I have many stories, but my parents, older brother, and grandparents all continue to visit and guide me.”

H. Ignacio.

“Often times my grandmother who passed will visit me to comfort me or communicate with me about a certain issue or stress I have.”

2. Findings from the in-person interviews.

A. Elizabeth.

Elizabeth reported that she had seen her deceased grandmother’s feet in her home in California many years after she died (in Guam). I asked her if, overall, her fa’ñaque experiences were feet-related. To my surprise, she responded yes. To this day, her grandmother’s feet remain a consistent element of her visitations.

“It would happen maybe once a year, every few years,” she replied. “Random times. There was never a pattern.”

B. Marissa.

Marissa’s father died when she was two years old. Growing up, her mother told her that he would never rest in peace until she, being the youngest child, was married and settled. Throughout her childhood, Marissa saw a male human figure walk into her room. She could never make out his face. The spirit would come in and then “just go.” She once told her mother about this experience, who said that it was her father.

The night before Marissa was married, her family reported hearing their difuntu father’s footsteps inside and around the house over a significant period of time. It was so sustained that, finally, her mother had to ask him to leave, to “go rest in peace, she’s getting married in church. Be proud of her.”

Marissa’s father also visited her mother, but ceased doing so after she remarried. Instead, he began to visit Marissa’s older sister.

According to this sister, he once asked her to check up on Marissa because “something was wrong with her.” One day, before her marriage, she asked Marissa point-blank, “Are you pregnant?”

Marissa, who was in fact pregnant, was shocked. She demanded to know how her older sister knew.

“Because Tata came to me in my dream and told me to check on you,” she replied.

Marissa admitted, “Of course, a month later I was at the doctor and I was pregnant.”

The day Marissa gave birth, *y difuntu* visited her sister again. He knocked on her door. A curtain of stringed beads parted as though someone walked through them. Annoyed, she asked him to please allow her to finish her work, promising she would then go directly to the hospital for Marissa's delivery.

After Marissa gave birth, her sister scolded her. "Man! Get married soon so that old man can rest in peace!"

When Marissa married, the *difuntu* stopped visiting.

C. Albert.

Albert's mother died of cancer in 2004 in California, where the family had taken her to receive better cancer care than what was available in Guam at the time. A few minutes before she died, she was enjoying breakfast and reading the morning paper.

"She passed away peacefully," he said.

His family's immediate *fa'ñague* was in the form of flickering lights at the California house. They were absolutely certain that she, as a *difunta*, was doing what she did in life, which was to check to see if the exterior lights were working and on as the evening arrived.

Several months later in Guam, Albert's father reported other visitations in the family home, again, in the form of domestic habits the *difunta* performed while she lived. In particular, the faucet in the kitchen sink often turned on and off in a series over several minutes. While she lived, the sure sign that dinner was being prepared was the intermittent sounds of water spilling into the sink.

Analysis of Finding VII

As I was conducting my fieldwork, some of the best bits of information were shared outside of the formal interviews or observations. These casual conversations featured stories of repeated visits by *difuntu* or *Taotao Mo'na*. Indeed, several individuals shared Maria's experience of a *difuntu* visiting over many years in a recurring pattern, such as during an important life event or anniversary.

This particular finding eloquently expresses the Chamorro epistemological element of *adahi*, that we must always be watchful of others, particularly those who leave the island. Guam is so remotely located that any off-island trip is a long one. Even today, families gather to emotionally bid farewell and welcome their family members at the local airport. It also a spiritual expression of the Chamorro pasttime *paseo*, which is used to describe an excursion of two or more persons.

Finding VIII. The Ability to Experience *Fa'ñague* is Inherited.

If I were asked what my main interest is in pursuing this study, my honest answer would be that I have a deep longing to know if *fa'ñague* is as genetic as it is memetic.

Let me repeat that this project is not scientific by any means; therefore, a study would most certainly be required to corroborate my hopes for biological proof. As a researcher, I am reasonably sure that if one looks hard enough, they can find evidence to build a case. In this sense, I am similarly resolved that science can prove it. To begin with, there is energy knowing that scientists have shown that blood relatives separated

from birth can behave identically over many situations, though they were never raised together.¹⁴ To me, this is promising.

As it turns out, a remarkable number of cases in my project suggest that the ability to experience *fa'ñague* is inherited. Consider the following data:

1. Results of the online survey.

A. First sources of *fa'ñague* knowledge.

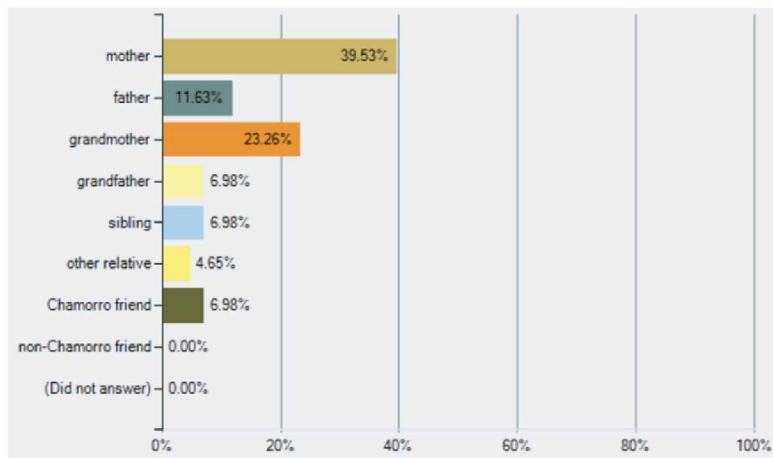


Figure 31. Responses: From whom did you first learn about *fa'ñague*?

Over half of the participants claimed to have first learned of *fa'ñague* from female family members.

¹⁴ I refer here to the *Minnesota Twin Study* conducted by the University of Minnesota from 1979 to 1999, led by Thomas Bouchard. Says researcher Nancy Segal, “We were surprised by certain behaviors that showed a genetic influence, such as religiosity and social attitudes.” (Lewis, 2014, p. 1).

B. First sources of *fa'ñague* knowledge also experience it.

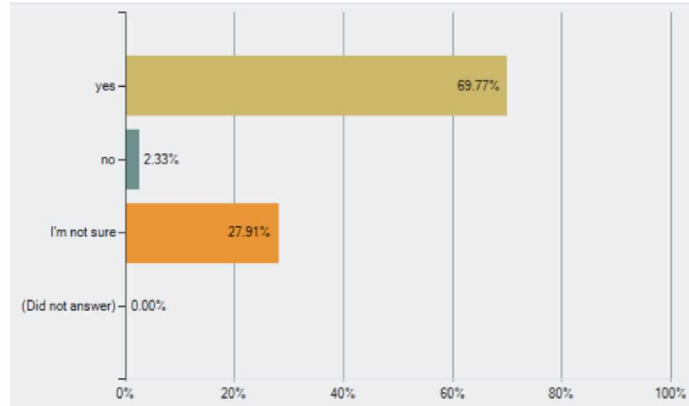


Figure 32. Responses: Did the person you learned *fa'ñague* from experience it as well?

The majority of the participants reported the individual who first taught them about *fa'ñague* also experienced it.

C. *Fa'ñague* runs in the family.

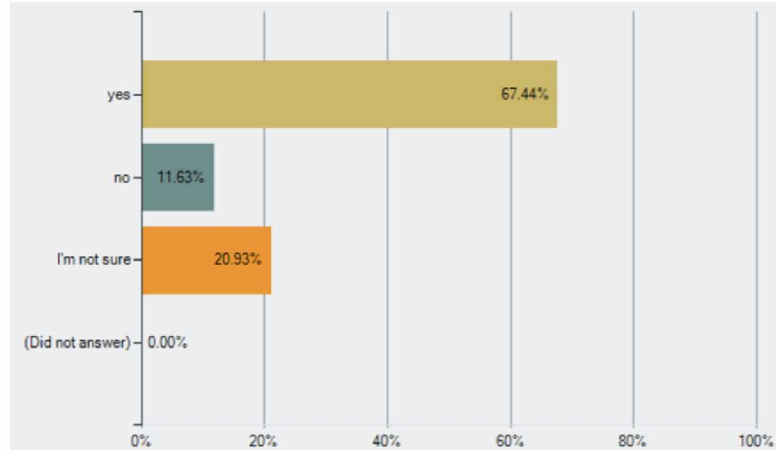


Figure 33. Responses: Does *fa'ñague* run in your family?

Most of the participants felt that the ability to experience *fa'ñague* ran in their families.

I must state here that I received a fair amount of criticism by my participants and observers about limiting my demographic to individuals of ethnic Chamorro descent. This is understandable as there are many in Guam and the Marianas, including those in academia and political leadership, who feel that there is no such thing as a full-blooded Chamorro, that we are, in fact, a people who are the result of intermarriage among Europeans and Asians. Therefore, we are not “pure.”

Individuals were vocal about how they felt this research was “biased” or somehow ignorant to the fact that other cultures have similar spiritual experiences — that, perhaps, these other cultures held the truth to the origins of *fa’ñague*.

I am not filled with this degree of self-loathing or authentic doubt.

My response to these concerns and criticism were, and still is, this:

Fa’ñague, the project and the experience, is a Chamorro experience. Others may have ghosts, poltergeists, Incubi and Succubi. Let us have and keep *fa’ñague*.

Following are excerpts from the narratives that corroborate this finding:

D. Oscar.

“As a Chamorro, I believe that we connect with our *Taotao Mo’na* and our own parents and ancestors.”

E. Steven.

“Growing up, when a close relative is dying or just passed, it is common to hear that they visited their loved ones before they die or when they have passed to give a sense of comfort to the living.”

F. Ernesto.

“Our family belief [sic] that we live in one with our ancestral spirits, our land, and our sea, and altogether make what our world is today. The finanaque [sic] experience is a spiritual and personal experience and not to be exploited.”

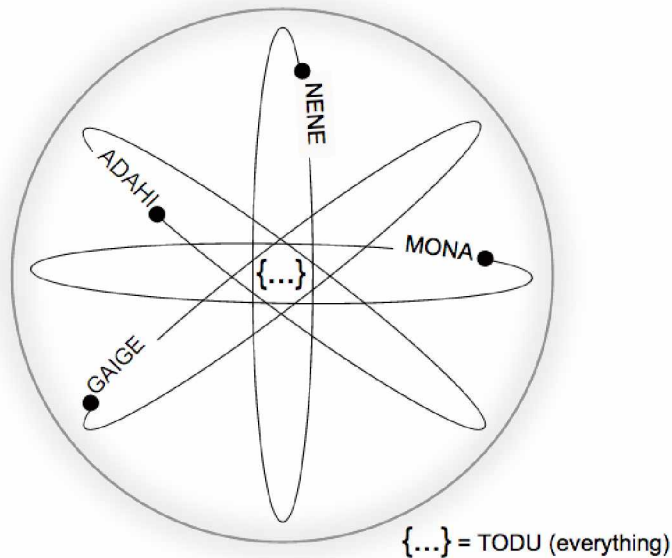


Figure 34. Ho's Atomic Model for Chamorro Ways of Knowing

2. Findings from in-person interviews.

A. Roy.

When I interviewed Roy, I asked him if he thought the ability to experience fa'ñague was something Chamorros are born with, whether it was inherited or learned. He had two thoughtful things to say.

First, that every culture, like the Chamorro culture, or religion, has some kind of afterlife experience. And the reason for this is that we all share death, despite our varied ethnicities and beliefs. His words are worth quoting at length here:

“It’s a little different than when I go somewhere and see, let’s say, a bed shake.

Even though conceptually that is a *fa’ñague*, that is a haunting. I think we can make the distinction between the two. I don’t think any Chamorro will say, oh this is a poltergeist. They’ll say, oh, Grandma’s visiting me — that’s where our minds go... Everything we do — how we walk at night, how we pass the evening, lowering the radio — it’s very much human. I think it’s very much engrained with us, very much who we are.” (Appendix E).

B. Bernardo.

I asked Bernardo the same question I asked Roy.

He said he felt that *fa’ñague* was in the blood, that even before European contact, the people of Guam believed the spirits of the dead remain with us at all times. He said that even if he hears a voice at night that he might suspect is from a deceased individual, that he is not scared. He talked of how his Elders would tell him not to be afraid of them, but to respect them.

I asked Bernardo if he felt it was, in this sense, disrespectful to ignore them.

“No,” he replied.

C. *Margaret.*

Like Marissa and Bartholomew, Margaret has regular *fa'ñague* experiences that include *difuntu* and *Taotao Mo'na*, although Margaret's particular *gai taotao* experiences include visitations by regular "friends."¹⁵

If you recall, she has also experienced *man baba* in the form of a cat she kicked when she was a 19-year-old upstart. She is especially endowed with a dynamic spiritual experience.

When I asked Margaret whether she thought or believed that the ability to experience *fa'ñague* was "in the blood," she said that she felt very much that her 41-year-old son shared some of her abilities. She admitted that when she attempted to discuss it with him, he preferred not to engage. The otherwise engaging interview sort of stopped at this point, as she had nothing more personal to share about this subject.

But then she brought up an iconic phenomenon that many individuals in Guam experience: Handprint "bruises" which appear spontaneously on one's arms and legs without explanation.

As a child, I often saw these marks on a cousin who was especially light-skinned, so the fingerprints and marks were clearly apparent as though she had been grabbed by a living human hand. Sometimes, she would have entire palm marks on her thigh or shoulder as though she had been slapped. In this case, the spirits were *magodai* of her;

¹⁵ In Discussion and Analysis, III. Post-Life Societies, (p. 68), I expound upon an aspect of *gai taotao* that suggests communication and friendship with a group of spirits that not only identifies as a clan, but with whom other "spiritual clans" may either be friendly or adversarial.

they found her irresistible. Though in most Western societies, a slap may have a negative connotation, Chamorros often give a playful, tender pat hard enough to make a sound as a sign of *magodai*.

About these bruises, Margaret said, “I believe it’s our gift. *Hu hongí na* [I really believe that] when I walk out of the jungle, *yan este kalan kanai guine* [and I have a hand mark on my arm] and my friends ask me ‘who has been holding you?’”

I told her that I believed that only Chamorros hear about this, and that we have handprints.

“Yeah, *y kanai* [the hand],” she replied. “So, see? You and I don’t know each other but we’ve been through different things in our life that we share.”



Figure 35. *"Duendes"* by Dan Ho

D. Marissa.

Malesso, Marissa's home village, is in the south. Toto village, where Margaret is from, is miles away in the central part of Guam. Yet Margaret's experience as a 19-year-old is profoundly similar to an event involving Marissa's niece, the daughter of the sister who received the messages from their *difuntu* father.

Marissa begins her story by stating that her sister's house sits on a property with a large "*Taotao Mo'na rock*."

Physically, this means that part of the bedrock (probably basalt) juts above the ground, but is actually part of a much larger piece of bedrock buried under the soil. Typically, these rocks are immovable without somehow pulverizing them first. But they are left alone because in the Chamorro culture, these rocks are sacred, and are known to belong to the Ancients. They are to be watched and not loitered about.

It is near this rock that Marissa's niece saw a cat one afternoon. By that evening, the child began to get sick and would not stop crying. The child's mother, believing in the skills of a local *suruhana*, a traditional healer, went to her and begged, "*Tan Maria*, please, please, I don't know what wrong with my daughter, but please help her."

The *suruhana* advised, "Go home, and tomorrow, tell your husband to pick me up before five o'clock and take me down to your house, because there's something there that made her sick."

Marissa continued, "So of course, the next day my brother-in-law goes to pick her up, and when she arrived my mother happened to notice Tan Maria's face in the car. When they passed the rock, her face changed into something like a very scary face. Her whole face just changed. She came down and said, 'I brought some medicine.'"

Her sister lived for five days and nights in their home without cleaning anything at all. This posed a bit of a challenge as *Tan Maria* combined coconut oil with traditional plants and applied this mixture all over every surface of the house, including window sills, floors and curtains.

“For three days, my niece wouldn’t eat, wouldn’t sleep!” Marissa exclaimed. “She kept crying. She was developing a fever. So, Tan Maria went on for three days, she even took the *patma* [blessed palms] and made crosses all over the windows and doors.”

“Don’t sweep or move any of these things,” the old woman instructed. “Tomorrow at exactly four o’clock, your daughter is going to start crying. The kind of cry will be a *na’ mahalang* [as if she misses something] cry, not this yelling type of cry. At four o’clock she’s gonna cry. Let her cry.”

Tan Maria then instructed her husband burn a used shirt outside of the house.

“She will continue to cry until that shirt stops burning. And then your daughter is gonna stop crying, and she’s gonna ask you to get down. And then she’s gonna call you *Mommy*, and then she’s gonna be alright.”

As Marissa’s story drew to a close, she blurted excitedly, “*Ai magahet* [Oh, this is the truth]. Exactly what she said happened. Tan Maria said it was the cat. The spirit or the devil was in the cat’s body.”

Analysis of Finding VIII

I understand that this finding will meet with the most controversy, mostly because I offer no science to corroborate this particular notion of inheritance. At this time, no

other studies that I know of will support a genetically based spirituality, although epigenetics¹⁶ offers us considerations surrounding trauma.

In the case of inherited trauma-related disorders, researchers from Uppsala University in Sweden studied the risk of psychiatric hospitalization among the descendants of Finnish evacuees to Sweden during the conflict with Russia from 1941 to 1945. The researchers tracked hospital admissions from January 1, 1971, through December 31, 2012, which yielded the following result:

Of the 93 391 study persons, 45 955 (49.2%) were women and 47 436 (50.8) were men; mean (SD) age in 2012 among survivors was 45.4 (6.58) years. Female offspring of mothers evacuated to Sweden during childhood had an elevated risk of psychiatric hospitalization (hazard ratio for any type of psychiatric disorder: 2.04 [95% CI, 1.04-4.01]; hazard ratio for mood disorder: 4.68 [95% CI, 1.92-11.42]) (T. Santavirta, N. Santavirta, & Gilman, 2018, p. 1).

In this case, the researchers found evidence that trauma could spread across generations.

Another finding was made by researcher Rachel Yehuda and her team at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and the James J. Peters Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Bronx, New York. This team found that the descendants of Holocaust survivors

¹⁶ Epigenetics is “the study of heritable and potentially reversible gene expression changes that do not involve structural alterations in the DNA sequence, such as mutations. This term was coined to describe changes that could not be explained by genetic mechanisms. Three major types of epigenetic changes have been described: DNA methylation, covalent posttranslational histone modification, and small inhibitory RNA-mediated signaling pathways.” (Stein & Davis, 2012).

had profoundly different hormonal levels of stress hormones than their peers. This makes them significantly more predisposed to depression and other psychological disorders.

They write:

A significant interaction demonstrated that in the absence of maternal PTSD, offspring with paternal PTSD showed higher GR-1F promoter methylation, whereas offspring with both maternal and paternal PTSD showed lower methylation. Lower GR-1F promoter methylation was significantly associated with greater postdexamethasone cortisol suppression. The clustering analysis revealed that maternal and paternal PTSD effects were differentially associated with clinical indicators and GR-1F promoter methylation (Yehuda, Deskalakis, Lehrner, Desarnaud, Bader, Makotkine, Flory, Bierer, & Meany, 2014, p.1).

Closer to the Chamorro experience is, of course, the Native American story. Many narratives of inherited trauma from parents taken away to boarding schools punctuates the contemporary narratives of cultures across the western continent and north into the Arctic circle. This emotionality has been expressed by several terms: collective trauma and and multi-generational trauma (Lajimodiere, 2012). It has been used to help explain epidemics such as diabetes, depression, alcoholism, and abuse within the tribes. More than the epigenetic examples I have offered in the previous paragraphs, I feel that this historically unresolved grieving may offer insight into my argument that *fa'ñague* is inherited.

Coda: *Fa'ñague* Displays Fractal Characteristics.

It seems entirely logical to suppose that if *fa'ñague* runs in Chamorro families, it ought to run across the culture. But how? As I have suggested, genetics or a social science cannot fully make the case, because genes and memes have equal weight when proving how behaviors are transmitted. Not to mention I would have to undertake a study in either of those disciplines to prove or disprove the other to come to conclusion.

This is why my research tool-kit includes mathematics. The structure (I rather like the term *chaos*) of *fa'ñague* expands outward or, as Mandelbrot so elegantly described, it is a fractal. To put it another way: *Fa'ñague* is a uniquely Chamorro experience.

I posed a question online that asked this question in a roundabout way. Every respondent knew at least one other Chamorro individual who experiences *fa'ñague* — in fact, nearly 40% of them knew over 20 experiencers.

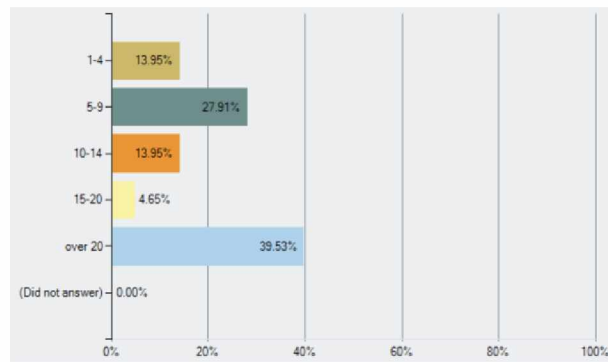


Figure 36. Responses: How many other Chamorros do you know experience *fa'ñague*?

When I made my observations in Guam of the *man'amko* in conversation, it became very clear that sharing the stories of *fa'ñague* was becoming more exclusive to Chamorros as each of them spoke. I watched their weathered eyebrows rise and fall; I listened as animated lips pursed and fluttered, and their rich voices growl and dance

breathlessly over how family members said this thing, saw that something, or felt another such way. Quickly, the lines between life and death blurred. The idea that the individual being discussed was either dead or alive became irrelevant in these sacred, Native discussions.

As most Indigenous children born into a culture that was suddenly thrust into the Western way, I found humor by watching the not-so-smooth transition of older Chamorros to their new American life. I spent a lot of time listening to and telling a certain kind of joke that was specific to my generation of Chamorros: We mocked the way our Elders spoke English. We found endless delight in imitating how the *man'amko* stumbled over the pronunciations of English words, and their misuse of tenses and number in clumsy English sentences.

“Joe, give me a cookie” became “*Zo, go get me a cookies.*”

“Tomatoes” became “*tewmatuhs.*”

There was no such thing as the “s” in plural forms. Porkchops were “*porkchop*”; apples, “*apple.*”

We found the Native accent inexplicably hilarious, no matter what new language was used. English, Japanese, Filipino were all fair game. We suffered deliciously, holding laughter in church as we listened to our Elders recite the Apostles’ Creed. Imagine the total crack-ups from the Pledge of Allegiance.

“Was” becoming “*is*” equaled comedy gold.

Fast-forward to this research. I am conducting fieldwork in Guam. Vague memories of this particular folly play in my head while I listen to Nan Lupe¹⁷. We are sitting in the community center in the village of Sinajana. She is a pretty old woman, with skin and eye color Chamorros call *mestiza*, meaning her “mix” is equal parts European and Native.

She speaks of her daughter who recently began to show signs that she had been influenced by some form of *man baba*. She, herself, is unsure of what it is, though she is careful not to use *Taotao Mo'na*. Instead she says that perhaps it is the devil or something else evil.

This daughter of Nan Lupe speaks out of turn. She has angry fits. At times, she would run away and not be found for several hours, only to return disheveled and wild-eyed.

Nan Lupe speaks of other incidents that paint a picture of a seriously troubled individual, and I feel for her as I listen. I feel her hopelessness and see in her face the face of my own dead mother. I never ask her any of the questions I had prepared; instead, I just smile and hold her hand.

When I rise to leave, I bend over to kiss her cheek and whisper, “*Si, Yu'os Maase, Nan Lupe,*” [God bless you, Nan Lupe.]

She smiles weakly and shakes her head.

“My daughter is possessed,” she blurts in an urgent, hushed tone. Then she looks away to wave at someone across the room, and I leave.

¹⁷ Not her real name.

Later, I am discussing my observation plans with the manager of the senior center, and I mention Nan Lupe and we that we talked about her daughter.

“Yes,” the manager says. “Her 5th anniversary was last month.” Nan Lupe’s daughter had been dead for five years.

Nan Lupe’s last words to me play in my head. “My daughter IS possessed.”

“Was” became “*is*.”

As I concluded my fieldwork, I made the decision to I believe that the *man’amko* always knew exactly what they were saying in English. There is no “was.” Whether breathing or *difuntu*, the Chamorro is alive in the world. I now had too much evidence to believe otherwise.

Analysis and Discussion

I. Non-Native *Fa’ñague* Adaptations

The most tantalizing subject of analysis and discussion, in my opinion, is how *duendes* and *man baba* fit into, or how they might be separated from, the *fa’ñague* experience. This research has revealed a few characteristics about *man baba*, those who encounter them, and how their experiences differentiate an event essentially separate from *fa’ñague*. In particular, a story that Bernardo shared with me in Guam.

Bernardo was adamant for me to understand that he did not fear the *Taotao Mo’na*. This lack of fear was founded on a piece of wisdom from his father, which approximated, “Don’t be scared of something with its back to you. Instead, fear its face when it looks you in the eye.”

When I consider this, together with the other accounts of headless and faceless *Taotao Mo'na*, I am convinced that Barnardo's father's advice informed an ease that Chamorros have with visits from *difuntu and Taotao Mo'na*.

Bernardo once dreamt of a small man, who demanded to take Bernardo's children for his property. In the dream, Bernardo refuses, but the small man becomes increasingly firm in his demands. The argument escalates. This both angers and frightens Bernardo. After several refusals, he grabs the little man, as if to choke him.

Bernardo wakes up in bed screaming and notices that he is clutching something in his hands. When he lets go, a large rat escapes and runs down the bed. He spends the next hour looking for the rat, but never finds it.

Why was Bernardo afraid of this *duendes* with a face he *could* see? Why is this recognition so horrific? I believe there is a theory here waiting to be fleshed out.

We can start with the fact that *duendes* and the sub-forms of *man baba* are not Native to the Chamorro culture. *Duende* is of Spanish origin and places prominently in the mythologies of most Latin American countries. It carries a complex meaning, ranging from a house spirit small in stature, to a reaction or sensation to music or dance that difficult to describe, but generally pleasing. (Gompf, 2013). However, during pre-Spanish times, "small in stature" is a description or experience not associated with Chamorros, especially with the Spaniards.

Several Spanish conquistadors in the early encounters describe Chamorros as tall and muscular, and freely celebrated their physicality in work, game, and rest (Rogers, 1995). From an archeological standpoint, it has been documented that Ancient islanders were larger than most human populations in modern times (Heathcote, 2006). Heathcote

goes on to say that only Chamorros rival Neanderthal specimens in bone size. Obviously, *duende* is not an Indigenous Chamorro spiritual personification and therefore not a true *fa'ñague* form. One can imagine that it became part of the spiritual lives of Chamorros in the adaptation of Roman Catholicism, and a yet-to-be-defined alchemy of Christian guilt and colonial trauma.

The case may be argued with the sub-forms of *man baba*, which I have proposed are *utak* (large white bird) and *Babuen Kuaresma* (Lenten Boar). Can the *utak* find its origins in the Holy Spirit appearing as a dove in the Christian tradition of Pentecost? Is not the *Babuen Kuaresma* a two-fold imposition upon Native spirituality? First, as the introduced and invasive species of pig, and secondly, in its Lenten attribution?

II. Chamorro Post-Life Consciousness

Earlier I wrote that Marissa's dead father communicated relevant and timely information to her older sister about Marissa's pregnancy and marriage. Tracey asked her mother while she was alive to send her a sign that she arrived in heaven after she died. Years later, Tracey smelled the scent of a local Guam flower. Elizabeth's earliest memories of her grandmother are at a child's eye level; it was her grandmother's legs and feet that play prominently in her mind's record. Years later in California, she would see her grandmother's feet while she cleaned, and recall an exchange they had often.

When I consider these stories together with the online data, it is clear that the research participants felt that when they experienced *fa'ñague* by *difuntu*, they received some sort of message. Therefore, we must ask: Is there an active consciousness by *difuntu* and *Taotao Mo'na*? Furthermore, can an intention that originates in the individual while he or she lives be maintained and acted upon when he or she becomes *difuntu*?

As I write this, I am recalling flashbacks from horror movies about mummies' curses, while at the same time, warnings familiar Chamorro Elders had given to misfits over their lifetimes. And I wonder, what does a map of curses look like across the Chamorro experience?

III. Post-Life Societies

Although Margaret is the only research participant on record who speaks of clans or “gangs” of *Taotao Mo'na*, it was a discussion that two other interviewees wished to remain off the record. It was also discussed in four of my observation sessions among the *man'amko*. Chamorros, particularly the *gai'taotao*, recognize that their *Taotao Mo'na* friends have other *Taotao Mo'na* acquaintances with whom they socialize in the afterlife.

I heard accounts of *suruhamu* interventions that were thwarted because of warring *Taotao Mo'na*. Normally a “silver bullet” in a crisis, these times the *suruhamu* was unable to perform a healing or reach a resolution for an individual because of the severity of the dispute among *Taotao Mo'na*. Rather, the individual needed change his or her life to remain safe and healthy.

In many conversations, the *Taotao Mo'na* were referred to in the plural. Very rarely was an individual *Taotao Mo'na* singled out or identified. One must wonder why Chamorros today understand and believe that their deceased predecessors interact in very social ways. How do Chamorros identify evidence that the afterlife operates as a society with rules unto itself? How does this belief serve the Chamorros who live? How does it serve the Chamorros who have died?

IV. The Effects of Environmental Change on *Fa'ñague*

Marissa, Margaret, and Bartholomew all shared stories of *Taotao Mo'na* experiences that occurred in specific places: An outcropping of bedrock, Ancient *latte* ruins, a bubbling spring, a shoreline. But the world changes, and we live in a time where scientists and politicians use the changing climate as a funding and political platform; therefore, it is a hot topic. Traditionally, to Indigenous people, adaptation to environmental change is a given, not a crisis. How to react to change is built into our cosmologies which guide us within our Native ecosystems. But traditions and language are disappearing quickly, certainly moving faster than geological time.

Therefore, it is worth discussing what happens, or could happen, if a spring suddenly goes dry. What happens if a *Taotao Mo'na* rock shifts under the soil during an earthquake or is blown apart as part of a military build-up? Will *fa'ñague* continue in these changed landscapes as it does among existing *latte* ruins, where paths between water and higher ground were once travelled? If a shoreline becomes submerged as the ocean rises, how will *fa'ñague* stories survive? Where will the *Taotao Mo'na* go? How does a physical change of the island affect the *difuntu*'s transformation into *Taotao Mo'na*?

V. The Lack of Conflict between *Fa'ñague* and Roman Catholicism

I was careful to mostly listen to the *man'amko* share their stories about being visited by their *difuntu*, and experiences with *duendes* and *Taotao Mo'na*. I did not record them, as they wished, nor did I take notes as I felt it would make my observations awkward. I discovered that the less I was involved in the discussion, the livelier it

became. I learned that there was only one question that seemed to energize them into a more animated engagement.

The question was this: *Hafa mohon siña ma afecta fa'ñangue y Katoliku?* [How do you feel Catholicism may affect *fa'ñangue*?] More accurately, it was not this exact question but questions around it, approximating queries such as, “Does *fa'ñangue* come from God?” or “Does God allow us to experience *fa'ñangue*?”

Only one among them felt that Chamorro tradition conflicted with the teachings of the Catholic church. This person was Nan Lupe. If you recall, she resisted “blaming” the *Taotao Mo'na* for her daughter’s strange behavior. She felt that it might anger God to acknowledge the power of Native spirits. She, like Tracey’s parents, felt that the best thing to do when one experiences *fa'ñangue* (or something out of the ordinary) is to pray.

In fact, Marissa, Margaret, and Bernardo all said that their *fa'ñangue* experiences were accompanied or followed by prayer to God. Online, I asked if the belief in *fa'ñangue* was in conflict with the Christian religion. Nearly all of the respondents answered “no.”

Why?

What is there about *fa'ñangue*, or the Chamorro cosmology, itself, that tolerates Christianity? What is it about Catholicism that enables the Chamorro individual to keep his or her Native afterlife beliefs alongside the faith in Jesus’s resurrection? What accounts for this peaceful co-mingling of opposing beliefs?

Future Research

One of the implications of *ma*, in my case and perhaps to other researchers of Chamorro culture, is that I needed to consciously borrow not only from across the forms of *fa'ñague*, but other Indigenous experiences in order to communicate a little bit about our afterlife wisdom. I have discovered in my attempts to deliver these research findings, that any combination of coding and analysis according to any of the research theories I proposed initially could not tell the story of *fa'ñague* in a meaningful or scholarly way. Indeed, there was no tried or accurate method to present my findings without first recognizing the *theatre* of voices that gives *fa'ñague* context and meaning in the scholarly world. Allow me to explain “theatre.”

As I was gathering the information for this project, I realized that I was also collecting biographies of the individuals I was researching. In the middle of my research theory, I discovered abruptly that I needed more theory to proceed. I felt that I had exhausted borrowing from the standard methods and found myself drifting. Almost by accident, I washed onto the shores of biography writing. Then, rather miraculously, I encountered the work of Robert Desjarlais and the idea of sensory biographies.

To be clear, *sensory biography* is not an official term that researchers formally use in academia; rather, it is an idea proposed by Desjarlais, an anthropologist on the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College in Massachusetts, in his book *Sensory biographies: Lives and deaths among Nepal's Yolmo Buddhists* (2003.) He writes of the belief systems of the Yolmo people through the narrated life stories of two elderly Buddhists, who, by recalling specific incidents and events in their own lives, inform both their individual experience and the collective Yolmo cosmology.

One of his subjects offered Dejarlais a straightforward telling of his life in a (although rich in metaphor) single “voice,” while the other, in a style that patterned a “theatre” of voices. In other words, the stories shared by the latter person were not simply her own; rather they were a re-telling of generations of old beliefs from the points of view of her ancestors. It is here where I realized that “theatre” gorgeously related to *ma*, as *ma* represents the intentions of many individuals from beyond an earthbound existence upon a living person.

It was natural for me to take from Desjarlais, and mix his idea of sensory biography with social science theory, mathematics, and literature to craft an approach I am calling *Neo-Indigenous Methodology*. I suppose the quick, perhaps clumsy, way of defining it is to borrow, borrow, *borrow*, from every place the researcher finds necessary, in order to most accurately tell the Indigenous story so it is understood by the non-Indigenous world in a way that makes it clear and revere-able. I believe, truly, that this will be my calling in future research. My goals here will be to:

1. Devise a working methodology of Neo-Indigenous Methodology that can be useful in cross-cultural research;
2. Work with other researchers to engage them in using and testing Neo-Indigenous Methodology;
3. Write a book on the background and application of Neo-Indigenous Methodology; and
4. Continue to study afterlife belief systems in Chamorro society and Micronesia.

Epilogue

My grandmother babysat my little brother and me while my parents worked and the older siblings were at school. The little bit I remember of her as active and well are vague scenarios of her chewing on hibiscus buds to soothe a sore on my leg, and calling out for me while I hid behind a couch where I scratched balls of dirt from between tiles on the cold floor and rolled them between my thumb and forefinger. After these fleeting early glimpses, the only clear recollections of her are after a stroke left her paralyzed and bed-ridden, unable to talk, moaning words that only my mother could understand. When she became *difunta*, my only interactions with her were in my memories.

Summer, 1974. I am eight years old now. My grandmother has been dead for two years. She passed without visiting me, and I found it to be a great relief. I had heard too many stories from cousins and neighbors of visitations that scared them out of their wits. I had been spared.

It had become my chore that summer to sweep floors, a daily task when one lives in the tropics. Part of sweeping included dusting and tidying up the few surfaces in the main room of our home — tables with books, paper and pencils, odd objects, and mementos. Some days before, my mother had cut some cattails from the ditch across the street and placed them in a vase. Actually, it was the base of the broken ceramic figure of a bird. It was a clawed vessel. A pair of frozen talons extended as if to seize vermin, fringed by a jagged, porous ridge that marked once glazed perfection. But it was hollow, and made a fine holder for dried stems or sticks.

As I dusted, I knew that it was time to replace these cattails with something fresher, so I grabbed them from the crackled shiny claws, and tossed them over my

shoulder. I remember thinking to myself that I would sweep them up in a while. A few minutes later, I started brushing the floor with the broom in the far corner.

In short order, I arrived at the spot on the floor where the cattails landed. But instead of being in a pile, each cattail was standing straight up, each as if on tip toes, feathery heads to the sky. They were not crushed as I had crushed them in my hands minutes before, nor were they laying in the heap I imagined they should have been. No. Instead, they were in formation, like skinny skeletons of *duendes* brought in from the ditch across the street.

I felt the urge to call out, I do not recall to whom, but just to say something loudly. But as the sound released itself from my throat, the cattails fell. In an instant, they lay in a heap, crumpled as I had crumpled them.

This all happened too quickly for me to be truly frightened. I was only slightly startled. It was a flash, though at the time and in my mind, it played in slow motion. I cautiously finished sweeping and proceeded with my day.

As I got older, I would retell this story, sometimes adding a new account of a magical but familiar experience. Some of these new stories include encounters with *difuntu* and *Taotao Mo'na*. But never about my *difunta* grandmother.

Not yet.

References

- Atienza, D., and Coello de la Rosa, A. (2012). Death rituals and identity in contemporary Guam (Mariana Islands). *The Journal of Pacific History* 47(4), (pp. 459–73).
- Bailey, C. (2008). *Atomic modeling in the early 20th century: 1904-1913*. Department of Physics, University of Colorado. Boulder, CO. Retrieved 11/22/2016 from http://philsci.archive.pitt.edu/4232/1/Atomic_Modeling_101208.pdf
- Bergen, F. (1899). Louisiana ghost story. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 12(45), 146-147. doi:1. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/533791> doi:1
- Bower, E. (2010). Obama's Trip to Guam, Indonesia, and Australia, March 21-26. *CSIS Center for Strategic & International Studies* website. Retrieved from <https://www.csis.org/analysis/obamas-trip-guam-indonesia-and-australia-march-21%E2%80%9326>
- Cabrera, F. (2010, October 30). *David Letterman improve on Guam*. [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPAJNgPy29A>
- Carleton, W. (1841). Irish superstitions: ghosts and fairies. *The Irish Penny Journal*, 1(34), 269-271. doi:1. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30001297> doi:1
- Carr, C. (1995). Mortuary practices: their social, philosophical-religious, circumstantial, and physical determinants. *Journal of Archeological Method and Theory*, Vol. 2, no. 2 (Jun., 1995), pp.105-200. Retrieved April 3, 2017 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20177326>

- Carus, P. (1902). Spirit or ghost. comments upon spiritism and spiritistic interpretations of physical phenomena. *The Monist*, 12(3), 365-403. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27899327>
- Center for Research Quality. (2015, January 28). *Mixed methods: an example*. [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOG96YAsdI>
- Chicoine, D. (2011). Death and religion in the southern moche periphery: funerary practices at Huambacho, Nepeña Valley, Peru. *Latin American Antiquity*, 22(4), 525-548. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23072573>
- Condon, S. (2010). Hank Johnson worries Guam could “capsize” after marine buildup. *CBS News* online. Retrieved from, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/hank-johnson-worries-guam-could-capsize-after-marine-buildup/>
- Creswell, J. (2008). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. 3rd Ed., Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. (2013, February 19). *What is mixed methods research?* [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OaNiTIpyX8>
- Crutch, J.D. (nd). Nanan Mame. No recording or publisher available. Lyrics retrieved from <https://elyricsandchords.blogspot.com/2014/10/jd-crutch-nanan-mami-lyrics-and-chords.html>
- Dernbach, K. (2005). Spirits of the hereafter: death, funerary possession, and the afterlife in Chuuk, Micronesia. *Ethnology*, Vol. 44 No. 2 (Spring, 2005). Retrieved March 1, 2017 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/37733992>
- Descartes, R. (1641). *Meditations on first philosophy*. Lexington KY: Pacific Publishing Studio.

- Desjarlais, R. (2003) *Sensory biographies: lives and deaths among Nepal's Yolmo Buddhists*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press.
- Driver, M. (1984). Fray Juan Pobre de Zamora. Hitherto unpublished accounts of his residence in the Mariana Islands. *The Journal of Pacific History* Vol.23, 1.
- Durkheim, E. (1984). *The division of labor in society* (W.D. Halls, Trans.). New York: NY. The Free Press/Simon & Schuster, Inc.
- Durkheim, E. (2008). *The elementary form of the religious life* (J.W. Swain, Trans.). Mineola:NY. Dover Publications, Inc.
- Finohaya (2013, January 13). Ancient village place names of Guahan (with English subtitles). [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1MPL1b-o10>
- Forbes, E. (2011). Hinenggen I man-amko adahe I sireno. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <http://paleric.blogspot.com/2011/10/hinenggen-i-man-amko-adahe-i-sireno.html>
- Gardner, D.N. (n.d.). Hands off our genes: A case study on the theft of Whakapapa. *Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights*, (2) 44-57. Retrieved from http://ankn.uaf.edu/CXCS/file.php/84/Readings/maori_CIPR.pdf
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Gompf, A. (2013). Duende. *The Remezcla Casting Couch: Dream-Casting Latino Horror Legends*. Retrieved from <http://remezcla.com/culture/the-remezcla-casting-couch-dream-casting-latino-horror-legends/>
- Graves, M.W. (1986). Organization and differentiation within late prehistoric ranked social units, Mariana Islands, western Pacific. *Journal of Field Archaeology*,

- Vol. 13, No. 2 (Summer, 1986). (pp. 139-154). Retrieved from
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/530217>
- Grey, P.S., Williamson, J., Karp, D., and Dalphin, J. (2007). *The research imagination: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative methods*. New York NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Hamilton, E. (1942). *Mythology. The timeless tales of gods and heroes*. New York: NY. Little Brown & Company.
- Heathcote G. (2006). Taotao Tagga: Glimpses of his life history, recorded in his skeleton. Anthropology Resource Center, University of Guam; Mangilao, GU.
- Heinrich, J. and McElreath, R. (2007). Dual inheritance theory: the evolution of human cultural capacities and cultural evolution. In Dunbar R. & Barrett, L. (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology*, (pp. 555-570). London: Oxford University Press.
- Ho, D. (2004). *Rescue from house gorgeous*. Portland ME: Rescue Press.
- Ho, D. (2006). *Rescue from domestic perfection*. New York, NY: Bulfinch, Time-Warner.
- History of Pasta. (n.d.). I.P.O. International Pasta Organisation Secretariat General, Retrieved 2/8/2018 from <http://www.internationalpasta.org/index.aspx?id=6>
- John, T.A. (2010). *Yuraryararput langiit-llu: our ways of dance and their meanings*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Alaska Fairbanks, AK.
- Kawagley, A. O. (1995). *A Yupiaq worldview: A pathway to ecology and spirit*. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Kelley, W.H. (1949). Cocopa attitudes and practices with respect to death and mourning.

- Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Summer, 1949), pp. 151-164. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3628632>
- Keswani, P. (2005). Death, Prestige, and Copper in Bronze Age Cyprus. *American Journal of Archaeology*, 109(3), 341-401. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40026118>
- Lajimodiere, D. (2012). A healing journey. *Wicazo Sa Review*, 27(2), 5-19. doi:10.5749/wicazosarreview.27.2.0005
- Lam, A. (2010). *East eats west: writing in two hemispheres*. Berkley: CA. Heyday Books.
- Leone, M. & Parmentier, R. (2014). Representing transcendence: the semiosis of real presence. *Signs and Society*, 2(S1), S1-S23. doi:1. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/674529> doi:1
- Lewis, T. (2014). *Twin brothers separated at birth reveal striking genetic similarities*. LiveScience.com. Retrieved from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/twin-brothers-separated-at-birth-reveal-striking-genetic-similarities/>
- Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills CA: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A. and Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 97-128). (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mandelbrot, B. (1989). Fractal geometry: What is it and what does it do? *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London*: A423, May 8, 1989, 3-16. Retrieved 11/20/2016 from http://users.math.yale.edu/mandelbrot/web_pdfs/fractalGeometry

McGregor, D. P., Morelli, P.T., Matsouka, J.K., Rodenhurst, R., Kong, Noella, Spenser, M.S. (2003). An ecological model of native Hawaiian well-being.

Pacific Health Dialog, 106-128. Retrieved 11/21/2016 from

<https://indigenoussagroecologies.wordpress.com/kanaka-maoli-hawaiian-worldview/>

Medin, D. and Bang, M. (2014). *Who's asking: native science, western science, and science education*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Myer, M.A. (2003). *Ho'oulu: our time of becoming: collected early writings of Mamulani Ahuli Myer*. Honolulu HI: 'Ai Pohaku Press.

Nicoloff, P. (2007). *Sacred Koyasan: A pilgrimage to the mountain temple of Saint Kobo Daishi and the Great Sun Buddha*. Albany: NY. State University of New York Press.

Opler, M.E. and Bittle, W.E. (1961). The death practices and eschatology of the Kiowa Apache. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, Vol.18, No.4 (Winter, 1961), pp.383-394. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/362894>

Pacific News Center. (2011). President Obama scheduled to make short re-fuelig stop on Guam Saturday night. *Pacific News Center* online. Retrieved from <http://www.pacificnewscenter.com/archived/45-guam/guam-news/18694-president-obama-to-make-short-re-fueling-stop-on-guam-saturday-night>

Pahima, L. (1997). Re-presenting Maori: broadcasting and knowledge selection. *Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights. Economics, Politics and Colonialization*, Vol. 2 (1997). Auckland, NZ: University of Auckland, Tamaki Makaurau.

- Palmer, C. (2001). *Ancient Hawaiian Management of Genetic Material*. Retrieved from <http://ankn.uaf.edu/CXCS/mod/resource/view.php?inpopup=true&id=2903>
- Parsons, E.C. (1916). A few Zuni death beliefs and practices. *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1916), pp. 245- 256. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/660603>
- Pregill, G. and Steadman, D. (2009). The prehistory and biogeography of terrestrial vertebrates on Guam, Mariana Islands. *Diversity and Distributions*, Vol. 15, No. 6 (Nov., 2009) pp. 983-996.
- Punzalan, B. (2015, April 07). 2010: Chamorro Population. [Blog post]. Retrieved November 02, 2016, from www.ChamorroRoots.com
- Purnell, L. (2002). The Purnell Model for cultural competence. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, Vol. 13 No. 3, July 2002 193-196 © 2002 Sage Publications. Retrieved 11/21/2016 from files.midwestclinicians.org/.../Cultural%20Competency/PURNELL'S%20MODEL.pdf
- Reepmeyer, C., Clark, G., Alexander, D., Okerill, D., Liston, J. and Kitalong, A. (2011). Selecting cultural sites for the UNESCO world heritage list: recent work in the Rock Islands – Southern Lagoon area, Republic of Palau. In *Pacific Island Heritage: Archaeology, Identity & Community*. ANU Press. Retrieved March 3, 2017 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt24hbn0.10>
- Rogers, R.F. (1995), *Destiny's Landfall: A history of Guam*. University of Hawaii Press; Honolulu, HI.
- Rowthorn, R. (2011). Religion, fertility and genes: a dual inheritance model. *Proceedings of The Royal Society*. Published online 12 January 2001. Retrieved from

- <http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/early/2011/01/07/rspb.2010.2504.full.html#ref-list-1>
- Rubinstein, D. (1983). Epidemic Suicide among Micronesian Adolescents. *Social Science Medicine*, 17, 10, 657-665.
- Sablan, J. (1968) Nobia Nene. (Johnny Sablan). Hafa Adai Records & Tapes [cd].
- Santavirta T., Santavirta, N., Gilman, S.E. (2018). Association of the World War II Finnish Evacuation of Children with psychiatric hospitalization in the next generation. *JAMA Psychiatry*. 2018;75(1):21–27.
doi:10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2017.351.
Retrieved from
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/2664260?resultClick=1>
- Schmidt, B. (2000). After beliefs: memory as immortality. *Near Eastern Archaeology*, Vol. 63, no. 4, The Mysteries of Ugarit: history, daily life, cult (Dec.2000), pp. 236-239. Retrieved April 3, 2017 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3210797>
- Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples*. London; New York: Dunedin.
- Smith, P. (2000). Cultural theory. An introduction. In Seidman, S. (ed). *21st Century Sociology*. (pp. 1-21). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Starks, H. & Trinidad, S.B. (2007). Choose your method: a comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qual Health Res*, December 2007, Vol.17 (pp. 1372-1380).

- Stein, R.A. and Davis, D.E. (2012). Epigenetics: a fascinating field with profound research, clinical & public health implications. *The American Biology Teacher*, 74(4), 213-223. Doi:10.1525/abt.2012.74.4.3
- Symonds, J. and Gorard, S. (2008) Death of mixed methods: labels and their casualties. *British Educational Research Association* [conference notes]. Retrieved from <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/174130.pdf>
- Tolentino, D. (2015) Ancient Chamorro burial rituals. Retrieved from <http://www.guampedia.com/ancient-chamorro-burial-rituals/>
- Wilson, D. and Severson, M. (2012). Long-term health outcomes of child sexual abuse. *American Nurse Today*. Volume 4 (Issue 10). Retrieved from <http://www.americannursetoday.com/long-term-health-outcomes-of-childhood-sexual-abuse/>
- Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony, Indigenous research methods*. Black Point NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- Woolf, V. (1925) *Mrs. Dalloway*. (1981) New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co.
- Yehuda, R., Deskalakis, N., Lehrner, A., Desarnaud, F., Bader, H., Makotkine, I., Flory, J., Bierer, M., & Meany, M. (2014). Influences of maternal and maternal PTSD on epigenetic regulation of the glucocorticoid receptor gene in Holocaust survivor offspring. *American Journal of Psychiatry*. Volume 171, Issue 8, August 2014, pp. 872-880 Retrieved from: <https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/abs/10.1176/appi.ajp.2014.13121571>

Appendix A

IRB Research Approval



Institutional Review Board

909 N Koyukuk Dr. Suite 212, P.O. Box 757270, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7270

(907) 474-7800
(907) 474-5444 fax
uaf-irb@alaska.edu
www.uaf.edu/irb

October 25, 2016

To: Michael Koskey, PhD
Principal Investigator
From: University of Alaska Fairbanks IRB
Re: [963312-2] Finanague: Chamorro Post-Life Communication

Thank you for submitting the Response/Follow-Up referenced below. The submission was handled by Expedited Review under the requirements of 45 CFR 46.110, which identifies the categories of research eligible for expedited review.

Title:	Finanague: Chamorro Post-Life Communication
Received:	October 24, 2016
Expedited Category:	7
Action:	APPROVED
Effective Date:	October 25, 2016
Expiration Date:	October 25, 2017

This action is included on the November 2, 2016 IRB Agenda.

No changes may be made to this project without the prior review and approval of the IRB. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in research scope, research tools, consent documents, personnel, or record storage location.

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Fa'ñague: Chamorro Post-Life Communication

IRB # 963312-1

Date Approved: October 25, 2016

Description of the Study:

You are being asked to take part in a research study about communication with the dead. *In Guam, this is called fa'ñague. One of the goals of this study is to learn how the finanague experience differs from person to person.* Another goal is to analyze what cultural factors maintain it in today's world. You are being asked to take part in this study because you have Chamorro ancestry. Please read this form carefully. You are invited to ask any questions you may have now or at any time during your participation.

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to take an online survey if you live in California or Washington. If you live in Guam, you will be interviewed by me and/or another researcher about your *fa'ñague* experience. If you are interviewed, a recording will be made of the interview. It will be shared and archived after the dissertation publication. It will be archived at the Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC) located at 1 University Drive, Mangilao, Guam, 96923.

Consent to Record

_____ I consent to have my interview recorded.

(your initials)

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The risks to you if you take part in this study are none to extremely minimal. The benefits to you are none. But you might have some satisfaction by participating in a study about our culture.

Confidentiality:

- Any information obtained about you from the research will be kept confidential.
- Any information with your name attached will not be shared with anyone outside the research team, unless you consent below.
- We will code your information with a number so no one can trace your answers to your name.
- We will properly dispose paperwork and securely store all research records.
- Your name will not be used in reports, presentations, and publications.

Consent to Use Your Data in Other Research Project or With Outside Team.

_____ (your initials) I consent to the use of my data in other research projects and/or with an outside team.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your decision to take part in the study is voluntary. You are free to choose whether or not to take part in the study. If you decide to take part in the study you can stop at any time or change your mind and ask to be removed from the study. Whether or not you choose to participate, will not affect your reputation with the research group, in your community or in Guam.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions now, feel free to ask me (us) now. If you have questions later, you may contact:

Dan Ho, PhD Candidate/Researcher; Phone: 269-252-3532; Email:
danhonyc@gmail.com

or

UAF Office of Research Integrity

Phone: 907-474-7800 (Fairbanks area) or [1-866-876-7800](tel:1-866-876-7800) (toll-free outside
the Fairbanks area)

Email: uaf-irb@alaska.edu.

or University of Alaska Fairbanks

Center for Cross-Cultural Studies (CCS), Indigenous Studies PhD Program

University of Alaska Fairbanks, 201 Eielson Building

P.O. Box 756730; Fairbanks, AK 99775-6730

Phone: [907-474-1902](tel:907-474-1902); E-mail: fycxcs@ankn.uaf.edu

Statement of Consent:

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I am 18 years old or older. I have been provided a copy of this form.

Signature of Participant & Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent & Date

Appendix C
Online Survey Questions

Questions 1–6

These questions concern consent, and fields to enter the date the survey is taken, the initials of the participant, and their age. (See Appendix A)

Question 7: You must be of Chamorro descent to take this survey. How “Chamorro” are you?

- ☐ Full Chamorro (both parents are Chamorro)
- ☐ Chamorro/Micronesian (Yapese, Chuukese, Palauan, Pohnpeian, Kosraean, Marshallese)
- ☐ Chamorro/Asian (Filipino, Japanese, Chinese, etc.)
- ☐ Chamorro/White (American, British, Australian, New Zealander, European)
- ☐ Chamorro/Black (African American, Jamaican, Kenyan, etc.)

Question 8: This survey is for Chamorros NOT living in Guam, but living in the United States. In what state do you live?

- ☐ (drop-down menu of U.S. states and APO addresses)

Question 9: How old were you when you first experienced *fa’ñaque*?

- ☐ younger than 5 years old
- ☐ 5 to 10 years old
- ☐ 10 to 15 years old
- ☐ 15 to 20 years old

☐ 20 to 30 years old

☐ 30 to 40 years old

☐ over 50 years old

Question 10: From whom did you first learn about *fa'ñague*?

☐ mother

☐ father

☐ grandmother

☐ grandfather

☐ sibling

☐ relative

☐ Chamorro friend

☐ non-Chamorro friend

Question 11: Does (or did) the person who told you about *fa'ñague* experience it as well?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ I'm not sure

Question 12: Did you recognize the deceased individual who *fa'ñague'd* you?

☐ yes

☐ no

Question 13: What was the form of the deceased person?

☐ face

☐ full body

☐ familiar smell

☐ voice

☐ familiar feeling

Question 14: Were you scared?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ a little

☐ a lot

Question 15: Were you comforted? Did you feel any sense of comfort?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ a little

☐ a lot

Question 16: Where did the deceased person appear to you?

☐ a room that was familiar to the deceased

☐ a room that was not familiar to the deceased

☐ outside in a place that was familiar to the deceased

☐ outside in a place that was unfamiliar to the deceased

☐ a dream

Question 17: Did the deceased person have a message for you?

☐ yes

☐ no

☐ I'm not sure

Question 18: If the deceased brought a message to you, was the message a:

- ☐ warning
- ☐ advice
- ☐ request to relay a message to someone else

Question 19: How often have you had “visits” by the deceased?

- ☐ 1 time
- ☐ 2-5 times
- ☐ 6-10 times
- ☐ over 10 times

Question 20: When did (or do) the visit(s) occur?

- ☐ immediately after death
- ☐ several days after death
- ☐ several months after death
- ☐ several years after death
- ☐ I still get visits

Question 21: Does *fa’ñague* run in your family?

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no
- ☐ I’m not sure

Question 22. Do you think that, for Chamorros, *fa’ñague* is something taught to us by our elders?

- ☐ yes

☐ no

☐ I'm not sure

Question 23. Do you think that, for Chamorros, *fa'ñague* is an instinct we are born with?

☐ yes

☐ - no

☐ I'm not sure

Question 24: If you have children, do you think they'll be born with the *fa'ñague* "instinct," or will you have to teach it to them?

☐ they will be born with the *fa'ñague* instinct, I won't have to teach it to them

☐ I will have to teach them about *fa'ñague*, they won't be born with the instinct

☐ I'm not sure

Question 25: How many other Chamorros that you know experience *fa'ñague*?

☐ 1-4

☐ 5-9

☐ 10-14

☐ 15-20

☐ over 20

Question 26: When the deceased person visits (or visited), do (did) you feel you are (were) being visited by a

☐ ghost

☐ a poltergeist

☐ an evil spirit

___ the deceased person

Question 27: Do you think that *fa'ñague* is something divine or sent/sanctioned by God?

___ yes

___ no

___ I'm not sure

Question 28: Is there a story you would like to share about your *fa'ñague* experience, or your beliefs about *fa'ñague*?

Appendix D

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your parents' and grandparents' background (i.e., where were they born, did they speak Chamorro, were they religious, etc.). [*Kao sina u sangani yu pot y nana-mu, tata-mu yan y sainan-niha?*]
2. What do you know about *fa'ñague*? [*Hafa un tungo pot fa'ñague?*]
3. How common is *fa'ñague*? Who participates in *fa'ñague*? [*Taimanu na un tungu fa'ñague? Kao todū y manChamorro mansiente fa'ñague? Haya mohon mansesiente fa'ñague?*]
4. Describe your first *fa'ñague* experience? [*Sangani yu pot y primet biahe na un siente na ma fa'ñague hao?*]
5. Describe subsequent *finangue* experiences? [*Kao guaha mas di uno fa'ñague 'mu?*]
6. Why would or should people be afraid of *fa'ñague*? Are there good things that come from the experience? Tell me more. [*Kao ma'anao y tataotao pot fa'ñague? Hafa maolek gi fa'ñague? Sangani yu mas y estria'mu?*]
7. What conditions, if any, do you feel enabled the *finangue* experience? (i.e., were you prayerful, was it at night, period of mourning, anniversary, significant event like wedding or graduation) [*An un konsidera y tiempun fa'ñague 'mu, hafa otrū mas na okacion man-dadana y fa'ñague 'mu? Pot ejemplu, kau un ta'taitai, kao nigap pot lisayo, taiguenao?*]

8. Some Chamorros have said that they have been visited by someone they knew. If this is your case, when was the last time that you had an interaction with the person when he/she was alive. had you seen or viewed their deceased body before the *fa'ñague*? Or were you away from their place of death (on-island vs. off-island)? [*Guaha na tatao masangan na ha tungo haye ma fa'ñague siha. Ngaian na un kuentusi y defuntu an lala'la? Dispues nai matai, Kao un li'e y difunto antes na fa'ñague hao? Pues amanu hao, giya Guam pot y sanlagu?*]
9. Do you think you “inherited” the ability to experience *fa'ñague* — that it’s a Chamorro “thing”? [*Pues este y fa'ñague, hafa y siniente 'mu na debi na man sesiente y taotao Chamorro?*]
10. Tell me about your parents or grandparents or siblings experience with *fa'ñague*? What happened? [*Kao man siente fa'ñague y saina 'mu pat I sinan 'niha?*]
11. Who experiences *fa'ñague*? If there are children who may have experienced *fa'ñague*, what happened? Is it the same experience for them as it is for adults? [*Mohon na sina y famaguon 'mu ma siente fa'ñague? Kao pare 'hu y sininenten niha kumo y man 'amko?*]
12. Does your religious or church affiliation connect with *fa'ñague*? How or why not? [*Un mosmu y misa? Kao illekmu na y kilisyano ha ma 'sesiente fa'ñague? Hunggan pot ayi. Pues taimanu?*]
13. How does your religion affect your understanding or experience of *fa'ñague*? [*Hafa mohon ma afecta finangue y Katoliku?*]
14. Do you have the ability to experience *fa'ñague*? Why and why not? [*Sina hao un ma fatinas y fa'ñague, hagu ha? Hunggan pot ayi. Pues taimanu?*]

15. Who initiates fa'ñague? Is it the living person or the deceased person? [*Pat y difuntu 'ha mafatinas y bisita?*]

Appendix E
Interview Transcripts

DISCLAIMER

The following transcripts have been decontextualized, and the real names of the participants changed to protect their anonymity. In addition, they are of individuals who do not live in the same village or come from the same families.

Roy (RD)

Interviewer: Dan Ho

Interviewee: RD

Date of Interview: April 3, 2017

Start Time of Interview: 4:45

End Time of Interview: 6:30

Location of Interview: Denny's Restaurant, Tamuning, Guam

Interview Topic: Fa'ñague

RD: So, one night, me and my two *paris* were recording in a studio up in mom's house, and you know, typical to us, we just kept rehearsing having fun, recording. There are three incidents I can share about what happened up there.

One night it was really, really late. As we were listening to our playback of the recording we did, my *pari* says, "Stop and rewind it." So I did. In the background we hear a fourth

voice on the recording that was super high on the vocal scale. So we tried to separate the voices to just my voice, my *pari*, Ric's, voice — and of course, everybody knows Doming's voice. But there was a fourth voice higher on the vocal register than Doming's voice. When we heard that, we figured it was time to go. It was super late — it was past 1 in the morning. So we packed up. The next day we talked about it and listened to the recording and it [the fourth voice] was gone. So it was just in that one instance in time that we were recording [that we heard it].

Everything happened up at the studio.

The second time, once again we were playing. Of course in the studio it is really loud. All of a sudden, we hear this loud bang on the door. Bang, bang bang! We weren't scared. We opened the door and no one was there. Of course, we felt this was a sign that we should stop — again, really late at night.

The third incident was really, what I think, is the convincing incident. One night — actually we were done early — we were outside standing by our cars. We had locked the studio, we were outside, shooting the breeze. I heard — we didn't talk about it at the time — but a wind blew and the skies were clear. Suddenly a strong wind came. What I heard was somebody coming close to my ear and whispering to me, "Close your windows." And I heard that so clearly. I didn't say anything to the guys about it but I said, "Hey, maybe we should go, it's getting late, it's dark and so on."

So we agreed, we all left. As soon as I got into the car, it poured like out of nowhere. It just poured. But still I didn't say anything.

A couple of days later, we were again at the studio during the day. I asked the guys, "Remember the other night, it was really clear and all of a sudden it poured?"

My pari, Domingo, said, “Did you hear somebody to tell you to close the window?”

And I was like, “Holy cow! I did!”

And it turns out that all three of us heard the same message, but separately. It was the same message — close your window.

DH: So what was that voice? Where did it come from? Who were these visitations from?

RD: You know, the person I first thought of was our brother, Sam, who passed away.

And I think that night we were talking about him — in fact, I know we did because we said that Sam used to sit over there on the porch. So the first person in my mind was Sam.

His name came to mind because I remember looking at the porch.

[As far as the other incidents] I can’t relate it to any specific person. I believe that they weren’t actual people I knew. I think the first two incidents may just have been the Ancients. The *Taotao Mo’na*. Because first of all the area we were at — you know, a lot of activity. But also, at some point in my early life, I was favored, in that area. I don’t know who they were, the spirits.

I don’t think there was any intention of harming us, I think they were just trying to remind us to respect them and mind the time. I think the third time, it was just kind of weird because we all three were so close to each other and we heard the same message.

DH: So do you think these unknowns were people? Or were they...

RD: I think they were people at one time.

DH: Do you think their personifications were people? Like that person’s voice, was it supernatural [sounding]?

RD: I believe they were supernatural. And I believe that they were communicating in a way that we can interpret them — using human voices. I would say they are human to that extent...there's a lot of grey area there...but they were definitely at one time human. I just think they aren't in their final resting areas.

DH: Yeah, so you think their origination is human?

RD: Absolutely. The reason I say that is because they wouldn't otherwise know how to relate to humans if they at one point didn't know — for example — what happens if I don't roll up my windows? They have to have some familiarity of...

DH: How many people do you know experience fa'ñague, other than your two paris?

RD: Mom was one. I knew a lot of her stories.

Our half-sisters. It seems in their experiences though, they were very haunting type of fa'ñague. They weren't very nice fa'ñague. They were more warnings, and more angry. Ours were as though they wanted to be human with us at that moment. The fa'ñague that I've heard with mom and the half-sisters were very aggressive to the point of — was it their imagination? — pots moving, and things of that nature, actual visuals. Mom would see something in the windows. These were very dramatic, very scary experiences. And also, my neighbor — apparently the yard between our homes is a pathway for spirits. I have not seen, but I have heard. I see patches of nice grass, or mushrooms growing.

DH: What about your wife, did she see her mother while you guys lived in the states?

RD: Other than seeing her mother in her dream [when she was sick] saying to her that it wasn't her time yet, that you still have to take care of her children. That's it.

DH: Do you think that visitation was real?

RD: I think it is...I think it's real. It's the dead trying to communicate. In my own experience with the deaths in our own family, I have not been visited, which is surprising to me. Like from Tata (our maternal grandfather), or dad, or Sam. Nothing really. Although, the half-sisters have. They would get stern warnings, but I've not experienced that. Sometimes in my mind this makes me doubt the idea that there are potentially these spirits floating around...but I believe in them.

DH: So do you believe that your belief in them is in conflict with your religious faith?

RD: Not really. But I can see where that is, that people say if you believe in spirits then how can you believe in God. Clearly there are two forces, good and evil. I just believe that in God's time, people rest. I don't believe it should hold a conflict to other persons' belief.

DH: Do you think that, for Chamorros in particular, *fa'ñague* is something we're born with, or is it a behavior we learn? Is it a behavior we inherit?

RD: I think that the idea of *fa'ñague* is on a couple of levels. I think first of all, that is a reality. I think that every culture has some sub-culture or religion has some kind of experience. And the reason we have that is we all share death.

However, I do believe that how the living interpret the visitations is culturally driven. So how I, as a Chamorro, experience it is that because our culture is very rooted in family, and respect for the time of the day, its rooted in the respect for our Elders, and our promises we keep to them — so a lot of these experiences can all be traced to these kinds of roots.

It's a little different than when I go somewhere and I see, let's say, a bed shake. Even though conceptually that is a *fa'ñague*, that is a haunting. I think we can make a distinction between the two. I don't think any Chamorro will say, oh this is a poltergeist. They'll say, oh, Grandma's visiting me — that's where our minds go. I don't want to say people are born with this, but that everyone is susceptible to it.

I think that some parts of *fa'ñague* are very nice — I think that souls coming to visit you to show you a good way of life — are very honorable visits. No one really knows the activity of the spirits. They can follow you. If I'm a Chamorro and I move to California, I can still be visited by my spirits.

DH: Ok, would you say that it's natural to us?

RD: Definitely. That's so real to us. Everything we do — how we walk at night, how we pass the evening, lowering the radio — it's very much human. I think it's very much engrained with us, very much who we are.

Bernardo (MK)

Interviewer: Dan Ho

Interviewee: MK [also present, SK, his Chamorro wife]

Date of Interview: April 4, 2017

Start Time of Interview: 6:45

End Time of Interview: 8:30

Location of Interview: St. Fidelis Friary, Guam

Interview Topic: *Fa'ñague*

MK: Growing up I didn't hear anything about it until after the Americans came back to Guam — I was born in 1938. I don't remember anything before that about *fa'ñague*, only that *duendes* can cover you up with a coconut shell or the *Taotao Mo'na* can take you into the jungle.

I only started to pay attention to the stories until after the war. We were told that the difference between the good and harmful *Taotao Mo'na*. The harmful ones were too big — maybe with big teeth and red eyes. But my father told me that they were actually just like human beings. So actually, I was never afraid of *Taotao Mo'na*.

I was more afraid of the *duendes*. My father always told me, as long as the spirit comes to you in human form, it is immaterial what the back of that form is, so don't be afraid.

We grew up knowing about the *Babuen Kuaresma*, [Lenten Wild Boar] and the flying bats that turn into what the English people call vampires. My father told me that one night they were fishing and they hit something up in the air. But still, I was never afraid. As long as the front of the form is human, you'll be okay.

When I was 14 or 15 years old, at that time the Chalan Pago church had no electricity. So, we had to remove the lanterns every night. One night my brother and I, he was two years younger than me, we went to the church and as soon as I got hold of the lantern I heard a sweet voice that scared me.

What would a lady be doing at 8:30 at night in the church? They always told the people that that church was haunted.

The lady said, “what are you doing?” And the lady’s voice was in English, not Chamorro. I turned around and ran from the church all the way to my house. My father came out and asked what was going on. “*Ileku, gos bonito na bos gi halom Guma Yuus, buente si Santa Maria, kume ’keton yu hafa na hu ’chuchule y kandet?*”

Then the fear dissipated. But that was the only time I was afraid, because I didn’t know. I was never afraid of *Taotao Mo’na*. As a matter of fact, one evening after we were married, I was told to go into the jungle and get medicine in MaiMai. I went down there about 7 o’clock in the evening. The only thing I was afraid of was the wild pig and snake.

DH: *Lao guaha na man bisita hao y man matai na taotao?*

MK: Okay, in 1971. I was on my way to Vietnam. I was assigned to combat duty. This was January 2, 197, and I’ll never forget the day. I was staying with my older and younger sister in California because I took a 30-day leave from the Army. I couldn’t go to Guam because I was to learn Vietnamese language in San Francisco, so I visited my sisters in Oxnard.

They notified us that my father passed away the 3rd of January. I called my unit in Kentucky and requested leave for Guam, and they said okay, but not to proceed to

Vietnam, just come back to Kentucky. So, I came to Guam, we buried my father, then we had the family rosary 9 days after the first 9 days [of public rosary].

Then I was on my way back to Kentucky. So, I stopped by Oxnard for two days. That night I took a shower and walked into my bedroom and sat on my bed to pray the rosary. The door opened wide and a bright light shined from the door and I saw the figure of my father. [he cries].

My father was standing there wearing white shirt and khaki trousers. He said, “do not be afraid.” I was startled, but I was not afraid. “I’m going to tell you this right now, you’re not going to Vietnam as a combat soldier.” He said, “you’re going back to Guam to help out your mother until everything is settled down. Do not worry about anything, you’re going to be safe.” I said thank you, I walked toward him, and he disappeared. The light went dim and he disappeared.

I went back to Kentucky and returned to Guam in April.

DH: *Pues magahet, ti un hanao para Vietnam?*

MK: No, I did go to Vietnam, but not as a combat soldier. I went with the Peace Treaty Commission. I didn’t go until President Nixon signed the Peace Treaty Pact. I went down as a delegate. As soon as I got there, I was told to take off my uniform and wear civilian clothes.

DH: *Pues haye mohon y fa’nague, y tata’mu?*

MK: My father. Yes, I know that. Because I could even smell the Camel cigarettes smoke. He used to smoke. He smoked a lot.

DH: Has he visited you other times?

MK: Well, at that time, it is a visitation from beyond. But ever since then, once in a while I'm sleeping and I don't know whether I'm dreaming or what, but he'll come to me and say I'm doing fine, not to worry. Or some other dead person will come to me and say, "I need something to eat." The old people say that whenever someone dead comes to you in your sleep to tell you they're hungry, then they need prayers. So, I immediately get up and start praying for that person.

[At this point his wife reminds him of something].

Yeah, that was the situation...the experience somehow got out of my system. One day, I was at the PX and this person comes up to me and asks me to buy him food.

SK [his wife]: His uncle many mentioned to me that he saw my husband talking to someone at the PX. He said his nieces and nephews saw him talking to this person, too. They asked him, who are you talking to? They didn't see the person.

MK: One night after I retired from the Army, it was about the same time about this Korean gentleman was asking me to get into business with him, but it seemed shady.

That night, I went to sleep. I had a dream that a little guy no taller than 12 inches told me, "Give me the children and you will become a billionaire." I told him no. He told me, "Give me the children!" Then I grabbed him, and when I did he turned into a rat. And she woke me up, and when I woke up, a rat was in my hand and it ran away and into the wall. I spent the night looking for that rat.

SK: I sat up on the bed — I asked him if he was dreaming.

MK: To this day, I say, I'm not rich, but I'm happy. My father always told me to always ask what I need, not what I want.

DH: Do you think that when you have these visitations, that it is something sanctioned by the Lord?

MK: To me, anything that has happened to me is the will of the Lord. Every night before I fall asleep, I say, thy will be done. Even if the devil comes to me, it is sanctioned by God. Just like Job. The devil came and took everything yet he said that it was God's will. Believe it or not, I was more religious before I went into the Army. I stayed an altar server until I was 21 years old, even though I was working at the Public Works. People were laughing at me. But I wanted to be priest but was told by Father Zoilo that I would never be a priest because I'm too *pikaru* [naughty].

DH: Do you think this ability to communicate with the spirits is something Chamorros are born with?

MK: I believe it's in the blood because even before the Spanish came to Guam, people believed the spirit of the dead are there with them at all times. That is what I believe. The Chamorros received that and it is inherent in their lives. Even if I hear talking at night, or I'm sitting down and dead people pass by, I say okay. I'm not scared. The only time I was scared was when I heard the woman's voice in church. My brother heard it, too. That is what the old people say, do not be afraid of them, but respect them. That is why I am not scared, because I respect them. And maybe I have seen them, but I try to deny that. And maybe I've heard them talk, but I chose not to say.

DH: Does that mean you disrespect them by ignoring them?

MK: No.

Ysabet (SK)

Interviewer: Dan Ho

Interviewee: SK [also present, MK, her Chamorro husband]

Date of Interview: April 4, 2017

Start Time of Interview: 6:45

End Time of Interview: 8:30

Location of Interview: St. Fidelis Friary, Guam

Interview Topic: Fa'ñague

DH: How did you first learn about *fa'ñague*?

SK: Our parents told us what *fa'ñague* is. Different stories about what it is. If you open the door you might see something that you might be scared off.

DH: Have you had the experience?

SK: Not really seeing things, but I have heard stories from the old people who mentioned that they do see things. My mother mentioned that when my brother was a baby, an animal came into the house and became part human. This was in Saipan. They don't know about *Taotao Mo'na*, they know *biklu*. I'm from Saipan but I don't know much about *biklu*, because I grew up here.

My brother also mentioned that the Chalan Pago church that at night, they see tall people coming out of the church. Big, huge, tall men as tall as the tree.

DH: When you hear stories about *fa'ñague*, are you afraid?

SK: Yes, I am afraid. If we see, something, yes. But we're not sure. I do experience hearing voices.

DH: What voices do you hear?

SK: I hear Chamorro voices, and I hear English voices.

DH: Are these people you knew?

SK: Only one times. One night, I was working on my school report. At midnight, I was sitting on a table. I heard a male voice from through the window; it was a young person's voice. It was *klaru*. Clear.

DH: Do you hear them in a specific place?

SK: All over. They follow me. In English and Chamorro.

DH: What do they say?

SK: One time, I got angry one night. I suddenly start hearing a woman's voice. I had a nervous breakdown. She was telling me "not to do it." I was angry at a person, and wanted to approach this person. But she said not to do it. This happened for a long time. My brother took me into a Sister Naomi to be healed. She mentioned about radio or music that I need to use when I hear voices. One time I used to hear a phone, but the voices became louder and louder. Some of them are familiar voices who are still alive. I was trying to find out how can I read these voices. I bought a book about clairvoyance to see what they were trying to communicate.

Another woman's voice tries to tell me that I should meet another man, and I tell her, "No thanks, I am a happily married woman." They seem to be going away right now because I'm fighting back.

DH: So, they have free will, these voices. They have intentions?

SK: They sound human to me. One time I told my husband that maybe this is *Taotao Mo'na*. He said that sometimes the *Taotao Mo'na* can change form and voices to sound human. It's hard to explain this, because in the beginning it's kind of scary. But I try not to be scared because it will give me a nervous breakdown again.

In 2006, I started hearing voices again.

DH: When was the last time you heard these voices.

SK: I still can hear them, but sometimes they're far away. I pray for them.

I'm okay, I still see a psychiatrist. He mentioned to me about *A Wonderful Mind*, the book about a professor who sees people, too.

DH: Have you met other Chamorros who share your gift?

SK: My doctor mentioned that there's one woman who hears voices too.

If a person is very angry, he can curse you. He can communicate with the spirits. And this hearing voices, they don't want me to read holy book. They don't want me to pray, or continue on. A few months ago, they were fighting with each other. It seems like they believe me now.

DH: How many voices do you hear?

SK: A lot.

DH: And each has a distinct voice?

SK: Yes. And the first time, it was only one voice. In 2006, it was many voices. No children, only adults. Sometimes I hear a baby cry.

DH: Do you think it is God's will that you hear these voices?

SK: I don't think it's God's will. Because God's will gives us instructions. To me, these voices do not come from God. These voices tempt me to do many things, but I started to fight back.

Margaret (PQ)

Interviewer: Dan Ho

Interviewee: PQ

Date of Interview: April 4, 2017

Start Time of Interview: 8:45

End Time of Interview: 9:45

Location of Interview: St. Fidelis Friary, Guam

Interview Topic: Fa'ñague

PQ: *Guahu si PQ, taotao Totu. Esta di gos mit, hu mattu tati gi tanota. Lao desde 19 anos yu expereancia.* [I am PQ, from Toto. I returned to Guam in 2000, but I've been experiencing *fa'ñague* since I was 19.]

I experience I think, because, being the sixth child out of eight, my mother called me “Doubting Thomas” — I have to see to believe.

Ni achuka sangni 'hu si nana 'hu na illekna na ma 'konne bayena gi halom tasi [It did not matter that my mother would tell me that the fishermen had caught a whale] — My father would have to take me — *papa Humatak pao bai li 'e megahit na humalom* [down to Humatak so I could see for sure that it had come to shore] — even if they put it in the newspaper — I have to see it with my eyes.

And then growing up in two faiths, my dad was Baptist, my mother's Catholic. I didn't know that as a kid, I only know that Daddy didn't go with us to Church. One thing I learned from my father is *fanma 'anao y lala 'la kini y manmatai* [be more afraid of the

living than the dead]. So, there was this challenge. My mother said be afraid of the dead, and my father said be more afraid of the living.

So, between these things, there's a boldness in me. This child, this sixth child of my parents.

The other challenges.

Pues [then], the first challenge. *Madulalak yu gi eskuela*, [I was expelled from school] at 13 going on 14, because I didn't want to speak English. My father took us to San Diego. *Pues, ti mamagi yu* [So, I didn't write] thousand times, "I will not speak Chamorro, I will not speak Chamorro in class." *Mattu magi annai 19 yu* [I came back to Guam when I was 19 years old]. My mother told me, *an un hanao para y college, y University of Guam, munga ma palacha* [if you go to college at the University of Guam, do not challenge people]. I learned that word *palacha* — at a very early age — it means to challenge. *Sa gaige hao gi halom paderon* [because you will be in the cliff line] — that's another word I learned — it means the cliff.

Well, it was November 1969, I got out of school, and we went to Rocco's Pizza, right there in the square. My friends then, PG, the carver — he's still around — and XO, he's no longer around, my brother and my sister. They remembered: *Hu'manao yu para y kemon* [I went to the bathroom] — it was across the jungle. So, I walked around the building and there was this cat, this black cat.

I'm entering the door. *Pa bai halom* [I was about to go into the bathroom], and there was the cat, *ha'atan'ha hu y katu*, he's looking at me straight in the eye. I would move this way, he would move the same way. I'd move the other way and he'd move the same way. I'd try to jump over it, he'd move to block me. I turned around and I gave it one big kick.

I was a very boisterous 19-year-old. I was from California *pues*, “*tough si doll*” [so I thought I was tough]. *Hu patek* [I kicked it]. It rolled 3 times, and it turned. I still get goosebumps repeating it.

I opened the door it was still there. It gave me that piercing look. I went back to the front and my sister said that I looked different. She said, “You just looked like you were stoned or spaced out.” I said, “Okay let’s go.” I was mad at that time to my boyfriend, XO. I wanted to go home.

I wanted to take my brother and sister...at that time, a Chamorro girl, 19 years old, going to college, working in the morning, taking her brother and sister to school. They’d sit in the car because that’s just how we did things.

So, *hu patek* [I kicked it], and then I just started feeling real hot inside. So I grabbed a coke bottle — it was real glass at that time — and I broke it. When my brother said something, I went over to him and held the broken end to his throat. And so the kids grabbed me, pulled me away from my brother and I passed out. PG, he’s still around, he was so afraid of my father because my father was very strict. But somebody had to drive my car home with my two siblings, so he did. And the minute they parked, he got out of the car and ran.

Pues ma’kueston y dos chehu’hu [So my two siblings were questioned]. “*Hafa*, what happened?”

They said, “I don’t know what happened to her, she came to the bathroom and came back, just her eyes were so big.”

My father called the neighbors. At the time my father couldn't drive anymore, he was 72. So, the neighbor's wife took me in the backseat, with my mom and dad to the Navy Hospital. My father thought for sure, drugs. Okay? 1969, they're coming in [to the island].

They took me in at the hospital and, believe it or not, my mother and father both said, after they had given me a shot, I broke the straps on the gurney. And that's canvas. They took blood tests, they took everything. Nothing came back. *Pues* nothing, it was all negative.

They said, "We don't know, Mrs. Q, We don't know what's happening to her." And, I cannot see. I was blinded, but I could hear my mother's voice. But it was another woman. They were trying, I guess, to possess me. I couldn't see. I just kept telling them, "I can't see." But I can hear a lady. Then the lady's voice changed to my mother's, and then into my sister's voice, who lived in San Diego! I kept telling them that I couldn't see.

They took me home. 3 days I was blinded.

My father, on the second day said — and I was not eating, I wasn't hungry. I just slept and slept. On the second day, my father said, *Nihi ta konne para Sipianu*, [Come, let's take her to Sipianu (a suruhanu, who was the old man that lived down the hill near the Marine Lab.)] And that old man, I'd seen him before. My father would go to him to get some kind of seedling — my father was a plant farmer. That old man will be coming down from the cliff, no shoes, with a big stack of wood on his back. And he was really very old, older than my dad.

When we drove up — my mother got all *fugu* [hair standing on end] — because, *ai!* how did he know? When we drove up he said, *Maila* [come]! My mother was the believer; my father was still playing around with it, but after this episode he started to believe.

Tun Sipiano took us in and said, “*Ahi, Pepe, ti po ma'konne. Lao ma'goddai. Ya ma'guiya. Hanao tati gi gimamu, chule y chininamu na* [No, Pepe, they weren't going to take her. But they were delighted by her, and they like her. Go back to your house, and take your shirt] — a shirt that you already sweat in — *saguan gi batde yan punot* [wrap it with coconut husk]. Put it behind the window where she sleeps. *Pues songi* [then burn it].” That was the second night.

On the third day, when I woke up. My mother said, *Nangga fan ya ta chagi este* [How about we try this]. She took the crucifix down from near the bed, and she put it on me. My mom said she had never seen anything like it. I was squirming, like it was burning me. I have goosebumps — my hair is standing. My mother said, “*Ai lokkue, Yunus, hafa y patgon'hu* [Oh dear God, what did my child do?] — What did she do? Forgive her!”

But she was praying to the wrong person. It was not God who made me sick. *Lao ma a'kontra nai* [they were at conflict] — the Crucifix, with me who was already the baptized child of God.

So, my father — *sa duru si nana'hu kuma'kati* [because my mother could not stop crying] — he takes another shirt, and burns it.

It was sunset, the sun was going down. When my father did that, he didn't put any solvents to accelerate. It was just the *punot* and the cloth. The flames exploded and reached up to the louvers. And just when my father saw that, my mother heard a woman's

shriek. It was like a woman took off. Then I started shaking on the bed, and then she put the crucifix on me again, and when I started shaking, and that woman took off, I started crying, because I can see.

After three days. And you know what the old man said? It was the three tumbles of the cat, *annai hu patek* [when I kicked it].

I was rebaptized at 19 at Totu Church. After that, my father went back to Sipiano, and told him to ask them to be kind to her. And that was my lesson in being *pulachat*.

Since then, they have given me strength. My brothers cannot believe my stamina. I am 67 years old, and a park ranger at Ritidian. I am the one who brings people into the jungle and Ancient latte sites and the caves.

The last event was two weeks ago. Again, because I was *pulachat*.

Some Chamorros arrived from the states and were asking to be given the cave tours even though the tour hours were on other days. The tours are on Tuesdays and Saturdays. And I don't break the rules or bend the rules for anybody. Maybe that's why I'm good at my job. I served on the parole board, and at one point I wanted to be a policewoman. But my father said, "*Taya parientes'mu gi lai* [you have no relatives in the law]." So, my father said no.

I did not take those Chamorro people in — not the first time. Then they came back and begged. I was so irritated. I took them in. I was angry. *Malefa'hu, ti hu ma'maisen annai hu'malom yu. I binibebe'hu nai*. [I forgot to ask permission to enter. It was my own hardheaded nature]. I did not ask.

When I got out of there, *esta* by lunch time I could feel it, *kalan ahi ma hohot ni 'hu papa*, *kalan taiguiguini* [it wasn't like I was running a temperature, it was more like I was cold].

And I told myself, "I cannot get sick! What's this now?"

Maybe it was the rain. I went home, I was home before 4:30. *Humuyung hu* [I got out of the car], the wind blew my hair, *mangenggen hu* [I was cold]. So, I decided, ok, maybe I'll take a quick shower and go to bed. I was chilled.

When I lay down to say my prayers, you should have seen me. *Pagu ma otutut tatalo 'hu gi kama* [the minute my back touched the bed] — I jumped straight up. *Ayu illek 'hu*, "Ai! *Esta hu tungu hafa bida 'hu*." [I said to myself, "Oh! Now I know what I did!"] I knew it. Because *chaot 'ha nai* [they have a bad reaction to it, really]. I was carrying the spirits to the bed and I'm trying to pray. They followed me home.

I said, *Asaina, dispense yu* [Elders, please forgive me]. The minute I came to work, I opened the center and ran into the cave and apologized. And no sooner as I did that, a wind came up and blew my hair. And I felt their presence.

So, when I got home, it lifted. By lunchtime, the same time the day before I had not asked permission, I felt better.

When I was 34, it was my mother's spirit. I was driving I-5 from Washington State to Oakland because mama was on her death bed. I left her on the 31st of January, and she said, "*Hanao y haga 'hu tati. Munga magatcha y anu nuebu guini. Sigi yan un espiha y familiamu. Lao fattu antes birfdey 'mu*." [Go back home, my daughter. Don't catch the new year here. Go and attend to your family]. January 24.

So, I took my second cousin from Yona. *Illeku nihi Chai ta hita, para bisita si mama* [I said, let's the two of us go to visit mama]. *Illekna, "Maolek pa be strol."* [She said, "I'm good to stroll."] So, I took her.

Ti mafatu 'ham [We hadn't yet arrived in] Portland, we were at Fort Lewis, Washington, when my husband got the call that mom had passed. Thing is, my husband said to my cousin, "Do not tell my wife, let her keep going." Because he knew wherever she is *man admit 'ha manao na espitat* [you'll have to have her admitted to the closest hospital because of her grief]. "So, let her keep going."

Night falls. *Las ocho. Esta pao muna lisayu as* [It's eight o'clock, they have already started praying the death rosary in] San Jose, my sister's house. Chai and I were driving down and singing Chamorro songs. All of a sudden, a white bird flies in front of my windshield. I didn't know what that meant, but my cousin knew. She started praying the rosary. Not a few more feet later — I'm so dense and very innocent — I didn't know what that meant. The next time, the bird is on my side, outside my driver's side window. Now I'm getting goose bumps, I know what that meant.

Illekna prima 'hu, despacio hao chelu, angin esta matuhok hao, maila ta maigu Yuba City [Take it easy, cousin. If you're feeling sleepy, let's stop and sleep in Yuba City]."

Illeku, no [I said no], we need to keep going.

When we got to Oakland, we got lost. We could not find the exit. We kept missing the Oak Knoll exit. I could see it, but we couldn't get to it. My cousin said, *Basta, chelu, nihi ta hanao gima chelu 'mu* [Let's stop this and go to your sister's house].

We walk into my sister's house in *San Jose, esta ha li'e prima'hu y Delorosa yan y purple* [my cousin sees the statue of Our Lady of Sorrows and the purple cloth] and I still didn't know what that meant. My oldest brother had to tell me. The look in his eyes told me what happened. And I broke down crying.

We had spent 3 hours in Oak Knoll looking for the hospital. And my sister said, I'm glad you didn't. *Sa gigan humalom hao, tiat masangani hao, esta taigue. Manmattu ham siempre guattu para hagu sa you have been driving all night* [Because the minute you would have walked in, they never would have had the chance to tell you that she was gone. We would have had to go back to the hospital]. So that was when I was 34.

Do I believe that is her spirit? Yes. Because she told me to return before my birthday — I knew she had a message. But I never got it.

Then a year later, at 35, I was very angry. My ex-husband had asked for a divorce. I was angry at God, at everybody. Why? I followed all the rules and you took my mom and my marriage is falling apart, and I got two kids. I decided to become a Lutheran, to change. I went and got all the papers. I already enrolled my children in the bible study. I was just rebelling — mad at everybody. And I dreamt that the time was going to deliver the papers — I dreamt of my mother and all of the Christian Mothers from Totu who I grew up with. I walked into the Church, and they were all there. I saw all their faces, but they were all gone.

After the church, I was going to give my mother a ride. In my dream, I opened the passenger door from the driver's side (I was sitting in the car already) and opened the door. And when I did, as my mother was stepping in, the papers flew out of the car.

The next day, I was going to take my kids to the bible study and return my papers which were on my dash. My son wanted to sit on the front, and my daughter in the back, so I reached over from the driver's side and opened the door and the papers flew out...all of them. Just like they did in the dream.

I didn't go. I didn't go. That scared me to death. First there were the Christian Mothers in my dream. It was as though they were saying no, don't do it. I really believe that the spirits of those we love help us when we are in turmoil. I was angry and a year after my mother died, I must have assumed her spirit, her strength, the person who was not going to sit there and cry. The last thing she said to me before she left me was "*Dogi haga'hu sa matai anglu hao kumati* [Stay strong my daughter because you'll die dried up from crying]."

After that dream, it was like a surge of some power. I stopped crying. I handled it. My kids are grown. I brought them back to Guam because they wanted to go to high school here.

So, *y ma'fa'nague* — I am not scared. It emboldens me. *Mas hu*...people ask me, aren't you scared? Men and fishermen ask me, if I'm scared. I say no, they're my friends, I know they're following me. Because where do I get this strength?

I don't want to explore where I'm getting that strength.

DH: Do you think your children have inherited your skill, your gift?

PQ: I think it's my son. He knows when I'm sick here. He knows when I'm feeling sick. I have nobody here. I think he may. He's 41 and he's probably afraid to explore it because he doesn't understand it that well.

But really, I'm not scared. *Ti ma'anao yu, ti ma'anao yu!* For an Elder person. At my job, at Ritidian, there are fifteen latte homes. When I first went there, I could not walk into it. They would not allow me to enter. I had to figure out a new way. Then an Elder *senot* from Luta, told me: *An pon hatme lugat ni upman na y taotaogue , fanule hachon yon songi* [If you enter a place that has been abandoned for a long time, find leaves to burn] to ward away my smell. To ward away our smells, because we are the people of the road. I liken that to the process of when people came to Chamorro homes with a baby, you would have to stand outside so that your travelling smells could dissipate. My mother would say, "*Na fan man maopao hamyo naya, sa trabiha ma'tapapangi y patgon* [Get rid of your smells first because the baby has not yet been baptized]." I believe that is the same process for me when I first went into the latte village.

In Ritidan, I also learned the true meaning of "*achaguata*." *Ti man achaguata*. It means "we are different."

I was really going to retire 2 years ago, but so many people wanted the tours. The latte village was last inhabited in 1685, but when Captain Figueroa arrived, he burned the village down. And today you can see pottery standing on the ground — not buried. Other archeological sites you have to dig. *Man'atogi* [They're standing straight up on the ground]. *Kinse na gima. Guaha quatru y yonya sets, guaha sinku, guaha sais* [Fifteen houses. Some have 4 sets of latte, some five, some six]. That's where I draw my strength.

If you're scared, then you don't have respect.

Hu experiancia y fa fanague na ti'hu lili'e yas despues y espiritun nana'hu [I have been visited by those I have not seen, then finally I saw the spirit of my mother].

Oh, there's one other time, When I was 58. One time I was lost at Ritidian. *Humalom yu sa* [I entered the site because] one man had his dog — you're not supposed to bring dogs because of the nesting turtles. I went into the site and was so angry I said a bad word.

Gu'gon humalom yu, hu'muchom y chalan. Ti hu tungo mana'hanao y taotao [The minute I walked in the road closed. I didn't recognize where the man and his dog went].

Pues [then], I blew my whistle, and the man came toward me, and I said, "You know you're not supposed to be in here with your dog." *Hu hungok y tasi, lao an hu monhayangue umalalatdi, yan hu espipiha y chalan'hu*, [I heard the ocean, but when I was done lecturing him] I came around 3 times, *hu chule y pen yah u mark y hagon* [I took my pen and started marking the trees because I got lost. I said to myself, "Man, where's my car." *Hu hu'hungok'ha y tasi, lao* [I heard the ocean, but] the further I got scared, the further I got into the thick of the jungle. I did not recognize anything.

Pues hu hasu, ai talu. "Asaina guela yan guelu, dispensa yu, Ti hu hasgnon chimatfinu, yan ti hu hasgnon tu'mai respetu giya hamyu [Then I thought, not again. "My grandmother and grandfather, please forgive me. I recognize that I used bad words, and I recognize that I did not respect you]." The minute I turned around, I recognized a path. And 500 yards away was my government vehicle.

Ma'lingu yu. Malinek I'luhu [I was lost. I had a headache] though. They will make you lose your senses.

You know, people ask me, man, I know your older brothers and sisters and they don't speak as well as you do Chamorro. And then I say, "*Ai, sa bula gangs yu* [Hey, because I have a lot of gang friends]."

DH: *Pues illek'na na gai'taotao hao* [So they say you have spirit friends].

PQ: That's what they are saying. I do not want to, *eya illekna na u fotmat, lao hu tungu* [as they say, make it formal, but I know]. I'd rather it be a mystery. I don't want to know. I have a lot of spankings to learn to balance.

My belief in God is strong, and no it doesn't interfere. The human part of me is what I need to learn to temper. Because that is walking in the light. *Lao an un na'e lugat po take over ayu y otru* [but if you give the space for the other side to take over]? I believe that, you know — because there are good and evil forces.

One thing I do know is that *taya na mas metgot gi fuetsan Yuos* [Nothing is stronger than the sword of God]. I walk in the light everyday. *Lao gaige'giya gi oriyu, angin malefa* [But the spirits are just hanging around nearby], they'll say, "Excuse me, Missy! *Haye hao* [And who do you think you are]?"

And I wish that, I guess it's through us that we can make this belief. And does it have to be because I'm Chamorro? I think it is. I believe it's our gift. *Hu hong na* [I really believe that] when I walk out of the jungle, *yan este kalan kanai guine* [and I have a handmark on my arm] and my friends ask me who has been holding you?

DH: Yes, I understand. I have only hear about Chamorros — that we have hand prints.

PQ: Yeah, *y kanai* [the hand]. So, see, you and I don't know each other, but we've been through different things in our life, that we share.

Marissa (SR)

Interviewer: Dan Ho

Interviewee: SR

Date of Interview: April 5, 2017

Start Time of Interview: 6:00

End Time of Interview: 7:15

Location of Interview: St. Fidelis Friary, Guam

Interview Topic: Fa'ñague

DH: Tell me about your first fa'ñague experience.

SR: When I was young, there were no street lights. Lighting is very limited. I grew up in Malesso. On weekends, when there is no school, or during the summertime, the neighbors who were immediate family — we would sit outside in the full moon, and everybody would be sharing stories. All of a sudden, a big round ball went rolling across the field.

My mother, being the oldest, said, “Shhhh. *Fan'mamakilu* [be quiet]!” We asked “Why?”

My mother said, “Don't worry about it, it's the spirit.”

DH: *Yan perfectu na bola* [And it was a perfectly round ball]?

SR: *Hunggan* [Yes].

DH: *Ya hafa kulot-na* [And what color was it]?

SR: *Apaka, nai. Aye ilekna, “Sabanas apaka.”* [It was white, of course. It was what they called “Blanket white”]. *Pues malofan* [so it passed us by], and it just so happen *na*

guaha guaka yan carabao gi [that there were carabao and cows in the] field. And it went right through them.

Ti ma repara y bola. Ya ti man estopba. [They didn't see it. And they weren't bothered by it]. It just passed through them. *Todu ham man'manao, no. Pues ilekna si nana'hu, munga man'makuentos, munga manmamaisen* [We were all scared, right? Then our mother said, don't talk, and don't ask about it], just pretend that you didn't see it.

DH: *Häfa mohon na ilekna* [What do you think she would have said]?

SR: *Sa taotao ti maolek un ayu, ilekna si nana'hu todü y tietiempu* [That they weren't good people, my mother would say all the time].

DH: *Taotao Mo'na?*

SR: Mmm. *Ti komu guaha piot, ya kumu guaha achu alutong* present in the area, *pues ginen ayu y achu* [Especially if there is also present a certain stone...then the spirits come from that stone].

DH: *Kao guaha na un chagi ma bisita y man'difuntu* [Have you ever been visited by the deceased]?

SR: *Si tata'hu. Sa matai y tata'hu an dos anos yu* [My father, because he died when I was two years old]. My father died when I was 2. So, growing up, my mother said my father will not rest in peace if you're a parent, *nai*, until your youngest child is settled, you know like married. Growing up, I'd see a figure, a human figure, and he'd walk into the room, but I can't see my face. And then he'd just go. I was telling my mom, and she'd say it must be my father.

When I got married, the night before I got married, they could hear him walking around the house. They heard him. And my mother had to tell him, “Go and rest in peace now, she’s getting married in church. Be proud of her.”

I got pregnant before I got married. My father would never visit my mother after she got married to my step-father. He would go instead to my older sister. He went to her and said, “Go and check your sister because something’s wrong with her.”

And so, we were picnicking one Sunday at the ranch and my sister comes up to me and says, “Are you pregnant?”

And I was shocked, I said, “No! How would you know anyway?”

She said, “Because *Tata* came to me in my dream and told me to check on you.”

So of course, a month later I was at the doctor and I was pregnant.

The day I was giving birth, my dad visited again. He knocked on my sister’s door. She had a bead curtain at the front room of her house. My sister was cleaning and she saw the beads part like someone walked through. So, my sister cried out, “I told you already I’m going to the hospital, just let me finish what I’m doing right now!”

My sister told me, “Man! Get married soon, so that old man can rest in peace!”

So when I married, the visitations stopped.

DH: Do you think your beliefs in the *Taotao Mo’na* and *fa’ñague* are in conflict with your Roman Catholic faith? Does God endorse this kind of interaction?

SR: Well, you know I asked Father Gus about *fa’ñague*. I sharing my stories about being a *techa* [prayer leader] at the church and experiencing *fa’ñague*.

I asked him, “Father Gus, I don’t know about this but do you ever get *fa’ñague* here at the church?”

And he goes, “Yes, I get *fa’ñague*, too.”

So, I say, “Really?”

“Yes!”

Because he lives across the street and the office is located next to the church. He said sometimes he would come up and work and he’d get carried away with work and he wouldn’t realize it was 10–11 o’clock at night. Then when he would be locking up the office he said he’d always hear them following me.

I said, “Are you scared?”

He said, “No but you have to believe that they are well alive.”

DH: Who do you think he meant by “they?”

SR: The spirits. The spirits of the people that passed on.

DH: Is someone who just died, let’s say, your father, does he qualify as *Taotao Mo’na*?

SR: No. My mother, I asked her, what is *Taotao Mo’na*? She said, those are people who lived here but they were never baptized. I guess the pre-history people. She said those are the people who didn’t have any kind of religion. Christian religion.

DH: Do you know anyone who is *gai’taotao*?

SR: My mom told us that my dad had *Taotao Mo’na* spirit friend. My father actually would climb a coconut tree and fall, and nothing would happen to him. Then I started to get mad at that because my brother inherited that — he had passed it on to him. And my brother was a teenager at the time, he would go out and come home late at night, and he would question my mom. “How come Maria is still playing out in the yard?”

My mother would say, “Hah? It’s twelve midnight she’s in there sleeping in her room.”

So, my brother checks and sees me in my room.

Pues ilekna si mama, “Ai, sa ma’lie talu, aye y duendes en’lilie [Oh, so you were made to see the little people again].”

But actually, I was mad at that because when my brother went to Vietnam, the *Taotao Mo’na* didn’t follow him. He got killed in Vietnam and I said, if he did have a spirit, how come he didn’t save him.

Lao buente ti compenene. Sa si Yu’os ma arekla. [But maybe his spirit friend didn’t follow him because God decided for him to go to Vietnam alone].

DH: What have you experienced or know about *ma’malangu* [When the spirits make a person sick]?

SR: My sister relocated from one area to another in Merizo. This land, where she built her house, had a *Taotao Mo’na* rock. And we tried to move it — I don’t know how many bulldozers we hired to move it but couldn’t. So, my sister got married and she gave birth to her oldest child. When the child was two or three years old — I’m not bragging — but she’s a pretty little girl with curls. One afternoon she saw a cat. That evening she started getting sick. She just started to cry and cry and cry.

My sister, believing in the *suruhana* [traditional healer], went to one and said, “Tan Maria, please, please, I don’t know what wrong with my daughter, but please help her.”

The *suruhana* told her, “Go home, and tomorrow, tell your husband to pick me up before five o’clock and take me down to your house, because there’s something there that made her sick.”

So of course, the next day my brother-in-law goes to pick her up, and when she arrived my mother noticed Tan Maria’s face. When they passed the rock, her face changed into something like a very scary face. Her whole face just changed. She came down and said, “I brought some medicine.”

Oh, my goodness, my sister lived for five days in the house that she couldn’t sweep or clean. Tan Maria took oil and leaves and garlic and mixed it and put it all over the house, on the window sills and on the curtains.

She told my sister, “Tomorrow again I’ll come, same time.” For three days.

My niece wouldn’t eat, wouldn’t sleep. She kept crying. She was developing a fever. So, Tan Maria went on for 3 days, she even took the *patma* [blessed palms] and made crosses all over the windows and doors.

She said, “Don’t sweep or move any of these things. Tomorrow at exactly four o’clock, your daughter is going to start crying. The kind of cry will be a *na’mahalang* [as if she misses something] cry, not this yelling type of cry. At four o’clock she’s gonna cry. Let her cry. She instructed her husband to get his used shirt, and go outside and burn it.

DH: With *punot* [coconut husk]?

SR: No, just the shirt.

Tan Maria said, “She will continue to cry until that shirt stops burning. And then your daughter is gonna stop crying, and she’s gonna ask you to get down. And then she’s gonna call you Mommy, and then she’s gonna be alright.”

Ai magahet [Oh, this is the truth]. Exactly what she said happened.

And Tan Maria said, it was the cat. The spirit or the devil was in the cat’s body.

Man, I saw that and I was, you know, of course you know my sister’s kids became very holy holy. They even became altar girls...[laughs].

I’m not gonna mention the priest’s name, one of the daughters, the youngest daughter, she was about five, started crying in the church. At that time, the Malesso church was under renovation they were having mass under a tent in the basketball court. She started crying and my sister took her to the car and my sister says, “What’s wrong?”

Her daughter said, “I see a light right here.” [points to her throat]. Not long after that, the priest became very sick.

I said, “Tell *Pale* [the priest], so he will know.”

She did and the priest ended up not liking them. *Atuasi* [thankless], she saved his life.

DH: Do you think *fa’ñague* is something your children will inherit? The skill, the intuition, to experience it?

SR: Let me tell you something. In my house, *nai*, right now, there are spirits in my house. And my children are aware of it. My oldest will be in his room and he’ll come out and ask me if I called him, and I didn’t. My youngest will wake up saying that someone was holding him. He could see the fingers depressing on the skin on his arm.

My husband went about the house and told them, “You want to be here? Fine, but please don’t hurt my children or my wife.”

I can feel them, but I say, “It’s ok, just don’t bother me.”

One morning, I was ready to leave for work. I always pray in the morning. I make the sign of the cross and pray, “Blessed Mother, make my day be holy, my thoughts, my words and my heart.” Footsteps walking in the hallway. Honestly. And I was all by myself, because I’m the last one to leave. And I prayed, “Mother Mary, you are stronger than these spirits, if this is a bad spirit can you please not let me see it?” My hairs were all standing up. “Mother, please help me. Please don’t let me see anything.” So, I walked out.

Even at church, I’ll be praying there. I’ll be staring at the Blessed Mother and I’ll be praying the rosary and the doors and windows are all closed. And I’m sweating like crazy because there’s no air coming through. But I said to myself I’ll be okay. *Ai* in the middle of my rosary. I’m sweating. But you could hear the wind blowing in the church, and the papers are flying and I said, no. I’m not gonna turn.

I look at the Blessed Mother and said, “He’s trying to attract my attention, to prove my love for you. I believe in you and I know you’re stronger than them. So, make them stop okay?”

Man, I could hear them sitting in the church pews — the wood creaking.

The thing that almost made me cry was when the footsteps came up again and my hair is standing up and I prayed, “Mother Mary, make them stop because I’m not going to turn.”

Sometimes the door slams. I'm not going to turn around. I'm not going to give up my prayers. Let whatever falls back there fall.

So that's when I told Pale Gus and he said, yes, believe there are spirits. He said they are very active right now.

That's why in my house from the bedroom to my door, everything is saints.

Whenever we go on vacation, I would leave my keys with one of my tenants. I asked him

I said, "*Pari*, can you do me one favor?"

At night at six o'clock, because that's *oracion* [hour of adoration] — you need to light a candle so that the Blessed Mother can come into your home.

I ask him, "Can you do me just one favor? Turn on the light before six o'clock. In the morning, you can turn it off, or if you can't that's ok, leave it on. As long as I have light for *oracion*."

My *pari* is an alcoholic, I'm telling you. But he became sober when he opened my door and said it was like a million eyes looking at him.

He went up the street because there were kids playing, he wanted the kids to help him find the light switch — he just pretended because he was scared. He said, "Mali, when I opened the door it was a million eyes staring at me."

Even my mom, she has diabetes, so when they go from Malesso to Agana, she needs a bathroom stop in between so I offer my house. So, I gave a key to my sister and my mother felt the same thing. My sister opened the door, and my mother, who is weak would not go in. She said, "Never mind, I'll just use the bathroom outside."

She said, “*Ai adai, an u baba y peta ’mu, kalan un miyon na man ’matai man ’attan yu* [Oh my goodness, when I opened your door, it was as though one million eyes were looking at me].”

That’s why I always have a candle burning. And I can tell when the candle goes out, because I’ll feel depressed, even if I’m at work.

Tom

Interviewer: Dan Ho

Interviewee: TS

Date of Interview: April 5, 2017

Start Time of Interview: 7:30

End Time of Interview: 8:30

Location of Interview: St. Fidelis Friary, Guam

Interview Topic: Fa'ñague

DH: What was your first experience of *fa'ñague*?

TS: My mother and, mostly my father, used to use it to trick us to go to sleep. My father would tell us if we're up too late, and we start smelling flowers, then it's the deceased passing through. It would be my grandmother or my grandfather passing through. Then every once in a while, he'd actually do things to trick us to get to sleep. I must have been 7, 8 years old.

DH: Did you have what you believed was an actual *fa'ñague* experience?

TS: I've always been very skeptical of these events when they're told to me. I always try to look for the most logical explanation. But on the night of my graduation with my master's degree, my then fiancé and I were asleep in my mom's house in Agat, it must have been two o'clock in the morning when a loud bang — and the doors in my mom's house are very old and very flimsy — and every little thing will rattle them and will make a sound. Well two loud bangs — it was like someone punched the doors twice. It startled

both of us. We woke up and looked at each other. Did you hear that? we said to each other.

So, I get up. I flicked on the light. And when I did, I heard the pattering of feet (makes noise) going out to the kitchen. Then it stops at the kitchen. And so I immediately check who's home. And at that time, it was only my mom, and me and my wife now. And my mom is asleep at nine, you now? My mom doesn't play those games.

It was just my mom who was asleep, me and my wife, and my dog, who was asleep across the other side of the house.

DH: So, when you heard this scurrying, what did you think it was?

TS: I thought it was my dog, because it was feet. It was like dog's feet scurrying around. But when I turned the light on, my dog picked up her head when she saw me coming out my door. So, it wasn't her, is what I'm essentially saying. She was asleep.

So that was 2012. So, from my upbringing until 2012, I really had no experience. So today I say, now, that it was an experience, because I say now that there is no way my wife and I can explain that. There is nothing we can say. My brother wasn't in the house. My mother wasn't going to wake up to play tricks.

DH: Have you been visited by someone you knew?

TS: Yes, my cousin, J's son, Kevin. He was my first cousin. He was in the military and passed away in Korea. I remember his wife, Nancy, asked me to do the eulogy. I remember just struggling with it because I was having a tough time with his death. I was only able to write it the night before his funeral. Well that night, after I wrote the eulogy, he comes to me in my dream.

The dream is we are at a train station. And there are tons of people there. I recognize him because he has his backpack on. He wasn't in his military uniform. He was in a nice blue shirt and jeans. He was clearly saying goodbye to people — not me, he had not seen me yet. I call out to him, I can see that he hears me, but he doesn't look. When he does look over, he looks at me straight in the eye and I could see that he couldn't recognize me yet — it takes him a second or two to process — and then he recognizes me. He signals me to wait and turns back to finish saying his goodbye.

[sighs, pauses] Thanks for bringing this up.

So, he comes to me — this is the night before his funeral — and we hug and he says thank you for everything. I imagine he was referring to everything I was doing to help prepare for his funeral.

And then he says, “Yes, that was me with the water.” And we hug and he goes away.

So, I wake up crying, and I tell my wife immediately, “Freaking Kevin just confirmed.”

What happened was on the first day of his death, his friend and I were preparing punch for people who were coming over to pay respects for Auntie Carol and his wife. So we were preparing punch using a 5-gallon bottle of water, and the punch mix. I'd poured half of the 5-gallon jug of water into the punch dispenser, and Lynn, his friend, was mixing the fruit punch. I set the remaining water next to me, and I was leaning on it. Out of nowhere, that 5-gallon shifts, and I lose my balance. We didn't really talk about it and left it at that.

But in my dream, he comes to me to say, “That was me with the water.” So, yeah.

DH: So how did that make you feel? Did you feel comforted by that information, did you feel irritated?

TS: Well, I woke up very emotional. Well, here's the thing. Kevin died with 16-17 years of service. Since he had joined the service, he had always wanted to be assigned to Guam, but he never was. He never liked being away. He had always tried but was always denied. He had been in Hawai'i, North Carolina, Japan — everywhere else but Guam. Anyway, this last rotation, if you do a hardship tour for Korea for a year, we'll send you to Guam.

I remember he died in February, I received a text from him in October saying, "Prim, I'm coming home. I got the orders, I'm coming home." Anyway, that Christmas my wife and I travelled. Kevin was going to come home to surprise his family for Christmas. He texts me with his travel dates. And I remember feeling horrible because we were leaving two days before his arrival. I texted him, "Sorry, Prim, we're not going to be here but we'll see you in June!" And then he died in February.

To me, the dream gave me comfort. Because I feel Kevin was saying that it was okay that we didn't meet. I woke up in tears, in fact, I woke up mid-tears. I didn't cry when I woke up, I had already been crying. It was a very emotional dream.

DH: Is there a conflict with your religious faith and your Native beliefs?

TS: I don't think so. I'm not the expert. Our Catholic church teaches that there is life after death. I'm not sure about what the church teaches in the immediate aftermath of the death, and the reception of the soul in heaven or elsewhere. And I feel that every time one gets visited, it might be when the soul is in between. I don't think that when a soul is

received, that it comes back to visit. To me, especially if they're in heaven. Why would you leave? I don't know what the house roles are.

DH: Do you think that an apparition of a familiar person recently deceased might actually be a temptation from Satan, because you're in a vulnerable state and the temptation of seeing that person again is very sweet?

TS: I think that's possible. If there is a particular purpose on Satan's part, if he is trying to lure you to specifically do something — by showing you someone that you miss, your chances are greater for doing it — then sure, I don't see Satan stopping at anything. I can see that. I'm not sure that's going on. In my dreams, I have not seen apparitions like that, I've only heard noises.

DH: Do you know anyone who is *gai'taotao*?

TS: My wife, um, I'm conflicted. My wife, since she turned 18 years old — my mother-in-law had taken my wife to the *surahana* at least 5 times because my wife used to have extremely violent dreams. In her dreams, she would see various headless apparitions, not headless, but black. And there would be no facial features. My mother-in-law would tell my wife who was still a young lady at the time, you need to pray. But everytime she felt the apparition — this spirit — coming, it would not allow her to recite her prayers. It would block her from doing that.

When we started spending the night together, I wouldn't see what she was seeing, but I would see her physical reaction in bed. And truly they were violent. I would have to do everything I can to get her up so she could get out of that. And each time, there is no faking that reaction when she opens her eyes. It's pure fear in her heart.

Now, okay, so that went on for several years. And then I came across — I got my graduate degree in guidance counseling. We studied a few types of sleeping disorders and I forget the name, but one of them attached pretty well. I read it to her and I said, “Babe, maybe you just have this kind of extreme condition.” And so, I’m conflicted.

Now that we have had our son, it has all but disappeared. Only every once in a while, she’ll get extremely startled, but nothing like it was in our early twenties. So, I’m not sure. And it only started at 18, prior to that, nothing happened. And we got married at 26.

DH: Do you think your son will inherit this ability of ours, this sixth sense, as it were?

TS: I think it’s taught. And I don’t mean a sixth sense, I mean an understanding of it.

DH: And how is it taught? We don’t really have lessons in this.

TS: Through our beliefs. Through stories.

DH: Do you think he’ll imitate, or will it be something else?

TS: I think he will know our stories, and unless he encounters some experiences of his own it will be just that. Like it happened to me. I heard what my parents said, was a skeptic, and then it happened to me.

Bartholomew (BN)

Interviewer: Dan Ho

Interviewee: BN

Date of Interview: April 5, 2017

Start Time of Interview: 8:30

End Time of Interview: 9:30

Location of Interview: St. Fidelis Friary, Guam

Interview Topic: Fa'ñague

BN: How *mafa'ñague* was explained to me was that there was a presence, a spirit, someone's around. I was very skeptical.

My dad's side is very *antigun* [traditional] Chamorro — my grandmother was very superstitious. My mom's side was always teaching that there was always a presence, just pray.

I was around four or five when I remember being able to see the *Taotao Mo'na*. I recall them always being tall and male. I've never seen a female. I don't recall ever seeing a head. I don't know if they were decapitated, or I was never allowed to see the head. I remember them always being around. My mother said that when I was a baby, I was always crying.

My grandmother on my father's side said we needed to call a *suruhana* [traditional healer, female]. And my maternal grandmother said we need to have a priest come and bless the house. So, the *suruhana* came and told my mother that there are spirits — the house is built on a pathway. There were a lot of *Taotao Mo'na* there. They explained

there must have been a *nunu* [figus] tree. There was always a bump in the road that could never be paved, and a wet spot where there was no pipe.

They always said they wanted to take me away. I'd always be missing.

I was in a room when I was three, and when she came in I wasn't there. They went looking around the house and couldn't find me for an hour and a half. They found me coming out of the storage room, which was locked.

It used to scare me as a little kid, because I saw so many *Taotao Mo'na*. My dad loved camping at the beach, and I remember being scared and crying because there were so many around.

When we relocated to the states in 1988, we stayed there for a year. Upon return, I could feel the presence, although I lost the sense of seeing them.

One of my relatives said, "Boy, I know you see *Taotao Mo'na*, do you still see them?"

My relatives said that they felt that they surrounded me, not to take me away but to protect me. To keep out for me.

I remember going to the Valley of the Latte. It's like I couldn't go into the house. I felt something pushing me back.

So I said, "*Guela yan guehu, kao sina yu malofan, yan halom gi gima'mu* [Grandmother and grandfather, can I pass by your place and come into your house]?"

And I still wasn't able to go inside, so I had to go around. I'd show my friends my goosebumps to show them that I felt a presence. I'd tell them, it's okay that we're here, they just want to let their presence known.

I remember when they were clearing the beach to build a hotel, my friend and I went down because we read the newspaper article about finding Ancient pottery. So we went down, and my friend wanted to touch the pottery. He wanted to take one piece. They kind of followed us when we were leaving, and at some point they left us, and I sensed it was okay.

Valley of the Latte was just last year, and the beach site was in 2009. It's not one of those things that I can look for. It happens when they want me know they're around.

Another time was when my grandmother passed away in 2004, I remember smelling her perfume. And I asked my roommate if his girlfriend sprayed perfume and he said no. An hour later, my mother called me to tell me my grandmother had died.

I've also experienced the strong floral smells, with the presence. And I've also experienced very bad smells, like death or something rotten here in our house in Sinajana. My grandmother was still alive and she instructed all of us to go outside. It was weird, because she was the one who didn't believe in *Taotao Mo'na*, she always said to pray. It was only when the scent left, that she allowed us to go back inside. She said that it was not a good visit, it was something bad. It's better to just be away from it, than to have it bother us.

I remember growing up and hearing other people say, that when a person passes, that they stay around for 3 days visiting. I thought to myself that it wasn't really true. But when my grandmother passed and visited me, I changed my views.

Recently, I had asked my mother to move into a property we had been renting out to tenants. When I was in, I was fixing up the place, and playing music loudly. The lights started to flicker. I told myself, okay, its time to quiet down and go to sleep. I took a

selfie with a digital camera. When I looked at the picture, I saw an orb — the kind you see on those ghost shows on cable TV — and I got scared. I thought to myself, this is grandma. It was around her anniversary. I believe this was her way of saying stop it. When we were kids she used to tell us no noise after 9 p.m. or else we'd upset them. She'd also say to not clean at night because we might sweep out blessings.

The next day I was so excited to share with my family my visitation experience. They don't have experiences, so I don't know if there is a connection there. I was close to my grandma growing up, I would tell her things before I'd tell my mother. When she passed, I took it hard, for many years.

DH: Is there conflict with your Native beliefs and what the Catholic church teaches?

BN: I don't think there's a conflict. If I feel a presence, I'll just say a prayer. Just maybe their soul is wandering and I can help them get to where they need to be. But at the same time...let me just share another story from my house in Sinajana.

My sister noticed that the house across the street was being blessed by a *suruhana*. She asked me if I felt anything. I said I didn't, and that I wouldn't go over there just to look for it. Then my aunt, who stays right next door to me, had a *suruhana* that same week blessing the house. My cousin asked me again, if I felt anything because the *suruhana* said that they were there, walking this way between the two houses. Later on I began feeling the presence. Of course I said a prayer. Now I felt them coming into the house. The Chamorro beliefs kicked in, I walked around sprinkling salt and burning palm leaves.

DH: I want to talk about another Chamorro code word: *ma'malangu*. Some people use this to mean a type of spiritual possession. Can you tell me what you know about this, or have you known or experienced this?

BN: One of my close friends passed away. We were in high school together. I learned she was sick. I'd go with another friend to visit her and I'd ask what was her sickness. She told me "It's the *Taotao Mo'na*."

A *suruhana* came to her house and told her mother to take away all the stuffed animals because the *Taotao Mo'na* would inhabit them and go beserk. I never understood any of that, or how *Taotao Mo'na* would make someone sick. My own experience with them was a protective friendly one.

They don't know what she did, or where she went, but she was sick. They moved her to her grandmother's house where she would speak in a different voice and hit her grandmother. She eventually passed away.

It's still hard for me to comprehend how she could have gotten sick.

My own experience is if the *Taotao Mo'na* would not want me to do something, I'd feel a hand. Whenever I did that, I'd go to a *suruhami* and they'd massage me, and instruct me to return to the place I may have caused the offense and ask for forgiveness.

DH: Do you think the ability experience *fa'ñague* is taught or inherited?

BN: I think it's taught. I received information from my *antigu* grandmother and my religious grandmother, who both taught me what to do when I experience *fa'ñague*. As I got older, I would feel the presence more, or someone tapping me. So I do both, I ask permission directly to them, or say a prayer.

I don't have any children, but I have godchildren. And they seem to be playing with spirits. As they get older, I will probably teach them to ask permission and pray.